

Yorkshire Naturalists' Union

**ORNITHOLOGICAL
REPORT**

**for
1976**

**compiled by:
John R. Mather**

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Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Ornithological Section

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The recorders, together with A. J. Wallis form the Reports Committee.

REPORT FOR 1976 Edited by John R. Mather

The late appearance of this report is due to the illness of one vice-county recorder. Having established a routine of regular production, this unavoidable circumstance was regrettable as it is very difficult to make up lost time once the years programme has been disrupted. Some records do not reach us until several months after the year-end concerned and early publication would mean losing many records. We rely heavily on local reports and if these are late, the county report is inevitably delayed. I do not believe in publishing too early merely to satisfy those who wish to see their records in print; a complete document, even though late, is much more desirable. Several organisations publish annual reports, some of which contain valuable results of field work, others are simply bird lists and standards vary. Details in the county report have to be brief for reasons of economy and local reports often give more details of a particular area or species. A list of reports sent to the Reports Committee has been published in the past and it is intended to resume this practise so that those readers seeking further information can consult the relevant reports. We can only mention those which are officially sent to us for extraction of records and secretaries are asked to send a copy of their annual report for 1977 to the appropriate vice-county recorder. Many already do this of course but there are some which do not reach us.

Three new species for the county list were recorded in 1976. The first of these, a Little Shearwater seen off Flamborough Head on 21st August was a result of the concentrated sea watching by Ian Wallace, Andrew Lassey and Irene Smith. The second, an Olivaceous Warbler, was also at Flamborough and seen by Lassey and Smith on 22nd October. This was the only British occurrence of this difficult species from Southern Europe in 1976. The third was a Ring-necked Duck at Hornsea Mere in April and May which was seen and sketched by Ray Hawley and others; this nearctic species is becoming more frequent in the British Isles. The year was notable for the numbers of Black-throated Divers which were more numerous than ever before recorded. The autumn was an excellent one for the larger shearwaters and the Flamborough watchers had no fewer than 19 Great Shearwaters. 20 Cory's were seen along the coast during the period and Sooty Shearwaters were again numerous, a regular happening now in contrast to the 1960's and before. The herons and storks were well represented with Purple Heron, Little Bittern, White Stork, Black Stork, Spoonbill and Glossy Ibis. An American Wigeon at Fairburn Ings in July and August was the first this

century and was followed by another on Whitton Sands in September. There were several Ruddy Shelducks, all doubtless of captive origin. Some of these were not supported by full details and I request that observers send descriptions of this species so that the *British Birds* files can be as complete as possible in order to monitor patterns of occurrence in an attempt to ascertain if any wild individuals are involved. There were two Alpine Swifts at Scarborough, one in June and one in September, the latter attracting several birdwatchers as it hawked over Castle Hill. The autumn was exceptional for Wrynecks with good numbers on the coast and unprecedented numbers inland. Trapping at Flamborough has shed some new light on warbler migration and several Marsh Warblers were caught and others seen. It was generally a good year for warblers was Subalpine, Greenish, Bonelli's, Yellow-browed, Pallas's and Dusky being involved. In contrast, the rarer pipits were represented by only one Richard's. A Little Bunting at Spurn in October was the first record for the peninsula. The Rufous-sided Towhee stayed over from 1975 and was last seen on 10th January. We have since learned that ten 'Arctic' towhees were imported into Leicester in 1975, some of which escaped. The Spurn bird could well have been one of these as it was showing characters of one of the western races which extend as far north as Canada.

I must thank all those who have sent in records no matter how few, without who's cooperation this report could not have been written and also my colleagues on the Reports Committee for their assistance during the year. John Dale must have special thanks for preparing the report for vice-county 61 in addition to his own. We are fortunate to have a wealth of artistic talent in Yorkshire and I am indebted to Dave Braithwaite, Ray Hawley and Steve Madge for their drawings and John Seeviour and Dave Bryan for their photographs of the Ross's Gull.

John R. Mather, *Chairman*, Reports Committee, May 1978

New Recorder for Vice-County 61: William F. Curtis

Owing to illness, David Murray had to relinquish the position of recorder for V.C. 61 in 1977 and we were able to enlist the services of Bill Curtis. Bill was born in Grantham in 1943 and became interested in birds whilst at the local grammar school. He is currently employed by the Ministry of Defence with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary as a Radio Officer. From 1957 to 1961, he visited all the east coast bird observatories and came to college in Hull in 1961 when he became a regular visitor to Spurn Bird Observatory. He travelled widely in Scotland during that period and had a prolonged stay in the Guadalquivir region of Spain in 1963 before going to sea in September of that year. He was first employed by a Marine Wireless Company serving on general cargo vessels and tankers; spent three months in Japan in 1965 and since January 1967 has been employed by the M.O.D. During 14 years at sea he has visited most countries and in consequence has considerable experience of the birds of the southern oceans. This experience will make him a valuable member of the reports committee. He has lived in Hornsea since 1967, being a founder member of the local bird club and their recorder since 1969.

It will not always be possible for correspondence to be answered by return during his absences at sea but a forwarding system is in operation and it is possible for mail to reach him within two weeks. His address is 17 College Gardens, Hornsea, North Humberside, Phone 2477 and I ask all bird watchers to give him their full support.

Any urgent matters in the vice-county can be dealt with by R. G. Hawley, the R.S.P.B. Warden at Hornsea Mere or any other vice-county recorder.

Classified List

All the rare and unusual species in the following report have been considered by the Reports Committee and found acceptable on the written evidence supplied by the observers and have also been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee where applicable.

The sequence used is that of the 1952 B.O.U. *Check List of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland* as amended, and published by the British Trust for Ornithology in *A Species List of British and Irish Birds* 1971. The nomenclature follows that of *The Status of Birds in Britain and Ireland*, B.O.U. 1971.

D. Braithwaite drew the Pomarine Skuas and Little Bunting.

R. G. Hawley drew the Gadwall, Long-tailed Ducks, Stock Dove and Wren.

S.C. Madge drew the Marsh Harrier, Little Gull and White's Thrush.

J. R. Mather drew the Wryneck.

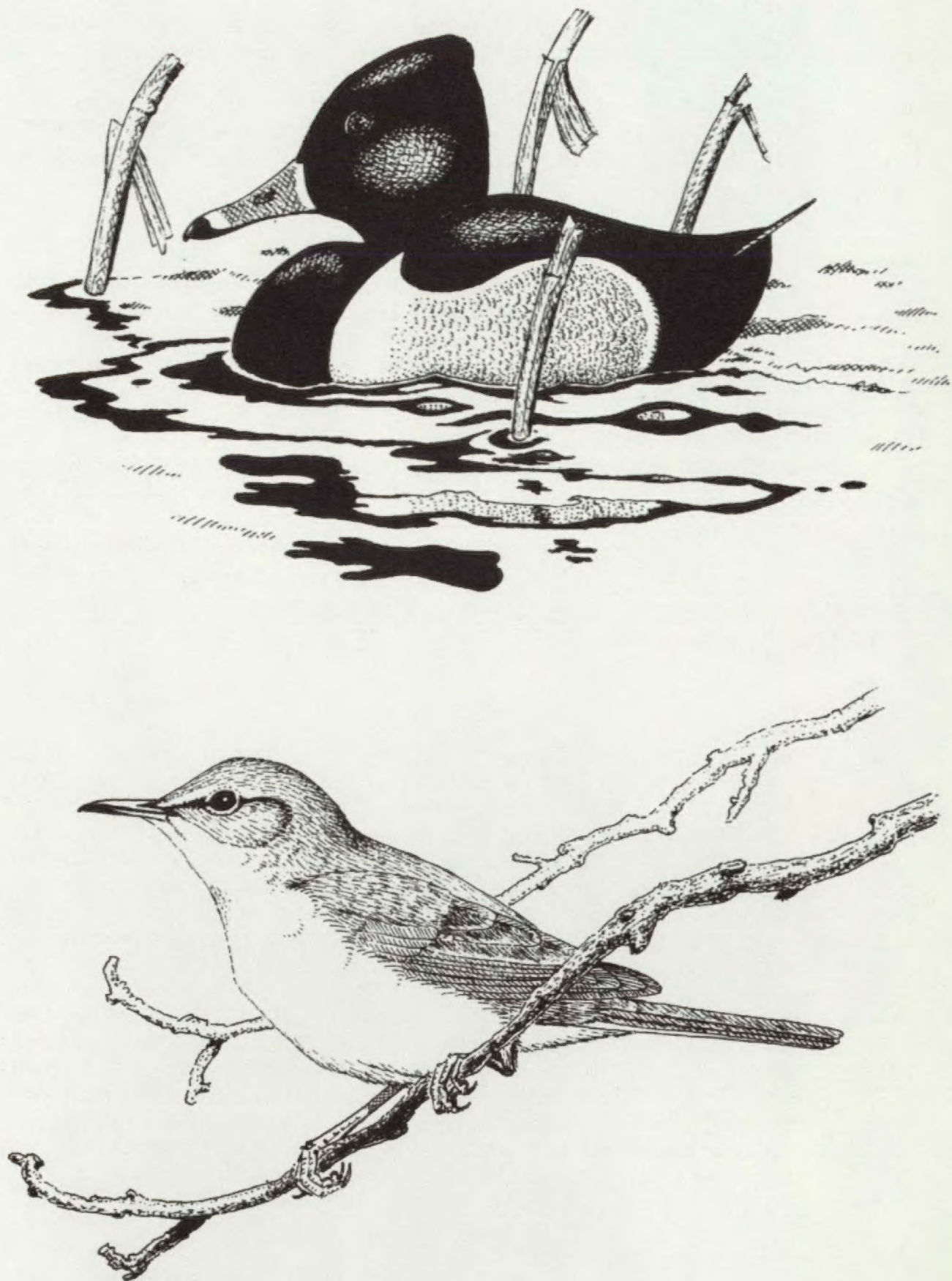


Figure 1. Two species new to the county list in 1976. Upper: Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*, Hornsea Mere 28th April to 15th May. Lower: Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida* Flamborough Head, 22nd October. Drawn by R. G. Hawley.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Singles at Burniston on 29th February (MF), Flamborough on 6th March (PAL. IS), Filey on 14th and Flamborough on 24th May (PAL. IS) were the only spring records.

One off Spurn on 27th August and two off Hornsea on 9th September were the first of the autumn (WFC) whereafter one to two were seen off several coastal watchpoints to the year-end. Watchers at Flamborough counted 22 birds during September to March (PAL. DIMW. *et al*). Scarborough, Filey, Hornsea and Spurn had a further 25 birds on 23 dates during September to year-end.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

There were more records than ever before with birds identified on many dates during January to May and August to year-end. Six off Flamborough; two in January, two in February, one in March and one in May and singles off Scarborough on 6th March and Burniston on 25th April were the only spring records. Autumn produced too many to list with the first seen off Hornsea on 30th August whereafter one to four birds were seen on 63 dates mainly during October and November off Spurn, Withernsea, Flamborough, Filey and Scarborough with five on 14th November off Flamborough as maximum in one day.

One was at Thrybergh Res. (first-winter bird) from 1st to 15th February (JED. JRM. *et al*). This bird was misidentified by several observers as a Great Northern Diver without any justification as it was a classic example of *arctica*. Inland occurrences at the year-end were interesting in that all were within a few days. One at Fairburn Ings on 28th October stayed until 3rd November when it was seen to be ailing and hauling out onto the bank (DP). One at Tophill Low on 29th October stayed until 15th November and two at Hay-a-Park G.P., Knaresborough on 29th October, stayed until 21st November when they were seen flying off and circling the area gaining height before leaving to the east (RE. *et al*).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Some spring movements were witnessed this year with 79 flying north off Poppleton on 25th January (WFC), 98 off Long Nab, Scarborough on 1st February, 78 on 15th and 28 on 16th (MF). Flamborough had similar movements which tied in with some of the above: 55 north on 14th February and 90 on 15th (PAL). 40 flew north at Spurn on 14th April where small numbers were seen up to end of May and early June with singles on 6th, 7th and 31st July. One flew south off Long Nab on 18th July. A few off Spurn from 14th August and then off most areas to year-end, occurrences depending very much on the weather. The largest counts were 79 north off Long Nab on the 12th December (MF) and 58 off Flamborough on the 18th (DIMW). Smaller numbers, up to 30 were seen on a few other dates.

There were several inland records: two at Welton Water on 22nd February with one on 24th/25th and 4th March, one at Hornsea Mere on 9th/10th February, two on 17th February, one from 18th to 27th, one on 3rd May, 7th and 20th/21st (SLJ. RGH), Tophill Low Res. on 7th/8th February and 6th March. Two adults at Southfield Res. (V.C. 63) on 31st October (C. Wall), adult found exhausted near Bretton Park on 18th November stayed until 21st (JMD. *et al*). One on the River Rye near York on 20th March (PH). One at Eccup Res. on 30th October stayed until 7th November (IHD. DJP. *et al*). One at Farnham Gravel Pit from 26th February until 1st March (CJH. JRM. *et al*).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Wintering birds off Fraisthorpe numbered 32 on 16th January and 28th February. Occurred at Hornsea Mere throughout the year but only in small numbers, up to 12 during March and April being the maximum. Of 35 pairs located in V.C. 63, 26 had some breeding success. Five pairs at Worsborough Res. failed due to falling water level. 38 were at Winterset Res. on 4th May and 23 at Wentworth on 29th August. Ca. 24 pairs reported breeding in V.C. 64 but several were unsuccessful. Three pairs summered at Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pit in V.C. 65 but no evidence of breeding.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps griseigena*

Singles at Hornsea Mere on 10th February (WFC), and Filey on 17th April (RHA. CRC). One at Fairburn Ings on 18th March (SCM). One at Winterset Res., first seen on 30th November 1975 remained until 16th April (PS. GJS. *et al*). One flew south at Filey on 17th April (RHA. CRC).

One flew south at Flamborough on 10th September (PAL. IS. AG). One summer plumage bird was at Bransholme from 19th September to 9th October and one was at Spurn from 21st to 24th September. Two were on Hornsea Mere on 1st November (RGH) and one on 14th (GED). One at Filey on 20th November (PB. *et al*). A juvenile was inland at Swillington Ings on 19th September (CEA. JW. DW).

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

One at Tophill Low Res. on 9th January. One at Filey on 21st February (IF) and two on 28th February (NAB). Hornsea Mere had singles on 19th March (RGH), 25th August (CHW), 1st and 27th September, with two in early October and three on 10th October with one seen on several dates to month-end and up to 14th November (RGH. *et al*).

One at Southfield Res. on 24th October (AS) and one at Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pit on 15th October (GDM).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Singles in Scarborough South Bay on 8th March (MF), Hornsea Mere on 25th April (JH) and 1st May (DJB). One at Fairburn Ings on 1st September (SCM *et al*).

One at Tophill Low Res. on 28th November and one at Southfield Res. on 18th December (BE).

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

V.C. 63 was well covered; the Doncaster area had a noticeable decline with pairs failing to breed at several waters for the first time in several years. Denaby Ings on the other hand did well, with 50 young reared there. Elsewhere in V.C. 63, 58 pairs were reported with a high failure rate due in some cases to fluctuating water levels.

Elsewhere in the county the status was normal with most suitable waters holding a few pairs and autumn gatherings peaking in August and September, 30 at Fairburn Ings and 33 at Swillington Ings being the maxima.

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One found dead on the shore at Spurn on 25th October and one flew north there on 28th October.

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

One off Flamborough on 25th September (DIMW).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

One off Scarborough on 6th March and small numbers seen off the coast from April to early July with 100 flying south of Burniston on 25th May an isolated spring movement (MF) and 64 flew north there on 13th June (MF). The first large movement was recorded off Flamborough on 25th July when 197 passed (PAL). 148 were seen on the 30th, 166 on 31st and 221 on 1st August (PAL). 140 flew north and 51 south off Hornsea on 23rd August (SML) and 130 were feeding offshore at Wilsthorpe on 26th August (SCM). Spurn's highest count was 115 on 28th August and 52 flew north of Scarborough in 20 minutes (0900-0920 hours) on 29th. 75 passed north off Flamborough in 1 hour 50 minutes on 3rd September

and 89 north on 10th (DIMW. AG). Smaller numbers occurred off most coastal watchpoints during the same periods.

Birds showing characters of the Balearic Shearwater *P. p. mauretanicus* were seen flying north off Scarborough on 25th July (MF), three off Spurn on 31st July and one on 27th August, Flamborough on 27th and 28th August (AG. ML. DIMW), Scarborough on 29th August (DJB) and Flamborough on 10th September (one north and one south) and 25th September (AG. PAL. DIMW).

Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*

One was off Flamborough head on 21st August and seen by P. A. Lassey, I. Smith and. D. I. M. Wallace. The description was accepted by the Y.N.U. and *British Birds* Rarities Committee and the species was new to the County list.

Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*

An excellent autumn for this species with more records than ever before.

The regular watchers at Flamborough Head were well rewarded with 19 definite records and 10 birds too distant for certainty which could have been this or the next species: two on 20th August, two on 28th, seven on 29th and one on 30th. Four on 2nd September and three on 3rd. All flew north (AG. PAL. IS. DIMW. JMcl, AD).

One flew north off Hornsea on 28th August (WFC) on which date one passed close inshore off the Marine Drive, Scarborough (RHA). One flew north off same place on 29th at 0815 hours and two at 0920 hours (DJB. RHA).

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

More records than ever before and like the last species, seen mainly off Flamborough Head. Three on 21st August, one on 28th, four on 29th, one on 30th, one on 3rd September and one on 19th, the latter feeding with gulls amongst trawlers (PAL. IS. DIMW. AG).

Singles passed off Scarborough Marine Drive at 0820 hours on 28th August and 30th August with one off Burniston on 30th (RHA. MF). All flew north. The conditions on 28th August were perfect for shearwater movement with a force 5-7 south-westerly and a good sea running in consequence.

Six flew south at Spurn on 2nd September.

All accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

This species featured well in the spectacular shearwater movements. The first appeared off Flamborough in late July with one on the 25th, seven on the 30th and 16 on 31st on which date one was off Scarborough and four off Spurn.

Small numbers were seen thereafter off the well-watched areas until the 28th August when the first of several large movements occurred with 192 at Spurn, 71 off Hornsea, 219 off Flamborough and 141 off Scarborough. All flew north with a force 5-7 south-easterly and many more than were counted must have passed. Another large movement occurred on 2nd September with 200 off Spurn and 548 in eight hours off Flamborough where the majority of birds were recorded during the whole period. After the 2nd September, Spurn had very few birds (only one to four birds on seven dates) up to 30th October. Scarborough too, had very few during September. 352 passed Flamborough on 5th September, 304 on 10th, 39 on 11th then fewer to one on the 25th and singles on three October dates.

Fulmar *Fumaris glacialis*

360 flew south off Burniston in two hours on 21st March (FAW). Further south off Spurn, only three birds were seen during that month and only low double figures were recorded until 400 passed on 15th April and 100 on 28th May and 105 on 2nd June were isolated peaks.

Autumn movements were more spectacular and Spurn had treble figures on several dates from July to September, 750 on 27th August being the maximum. 770 flew north off Hornsea on 28th August and 191 in two hours off Filey on same date (AG. DH). 1000 flew north off Flamborough on 10th September (PAL). Several blue phase birds were seen off Flamborough: singles on 4th April, 30th April, 27th August and 11th September with three on 31st September (PAL. AG). One was off Filey on 31st July (HJW) and one off Burniston on 28th November (MF). All flew north.

Inland birds occurred over Swillington Ings on 23rd May (JW), Fairburn Ings on 2nd June (SCM), and Staveley Lagoon on 12th September (PTT), a day of heavy gales. One flew west inland at Blacktoft Sands on 27th May and eight circled over the Ouse/Trent confluence in strong winds on 28th May before flying east down the Humber (AG).

Gannet *Sula bassana*

The Bempton breeding colony produced 89 fledged young from 97 chicks hatched from 109 eggs (Miss JF).

The heaviest sea movement occurred on 10th September when Spurn had 148 and Flamborough 1200 (PAL). Smaller numbers, up to 300–400, passed on several dates mainly during August to October off Spurn, Hornsea and Flamborough and Filey.

Two immatures were up the Humber at Blacktoft Sands with strong north-easterly winds on 12th September (AG) and an adult was at Worsborough Res. on same date.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The Ravenscar colony had 26 nest sites on 21st June (JWe) and there were 19 occupied nests on the cliffs just north of Filey Brigg (SML). The Hornsea Mere tree roost held similar numbers to last year. Tophill Low Res. had 24 on 26th January and 29 on 29th September (PWI). A white headed bird was at Filey Brigg on 18th April (RJR).

A remarkable inland movement occurred during mid-April: five flew west over Redmires Res. on 11th, one with a white head and neck flew west over Swillington Ings on 17th, three were at Gouthwaite Res. and four at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 18th, four at Hay-a-Park Gravel Pit, eight west over Blacktoft Sands, ten over Winterset Res. and 23 over Fewston Res. on 19th, five at Fairburn Ings on 20th and 13 at Sandsfield on 24th. Single birds were at a few other waters during this period.

There were many other records, mainly of single birds, mostly during the spring and autumn at waters too numerous to list.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

21 were in Whitby Harbour on 30th January (DJB).

20 at Bempton (Scale Nab) on 30th July. 59 on cliffs at Flamborough on 27th August with a further 81 flying north on same date (SML). 70 flew south here on 1st November and 65 south on 6th December. Spurn had comparatively small numbers with 15 on 17th October the only double figures identified although some birds must pass and be recorded, quite unnecessarily as 'shagorants'. Inland, one was at Fairburn Ings on 6th May with six Cormorants, two were found dead (shot) at Pontefract Park Lake; an adult and a first-winter. The former had a 10½" Pike in its gullet.

An immature was on Horbury Flash on 30th September (PS), one flew south-west over Wath Ings on 20th October (JS) and one was on the River Don at Blacktoft on 20th October (AG).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Breeding birds reported were; V.C. 61: one pair at Mattie Brown's Creek (nested here in 1975), V.C. 62: nine occupied nests at Kirkdale (GWF), nine nests with well-grown young at Sleightholmdale in May (A & JD), V.C. 63: one pair near Barnsley, one pair at Bretton Park

(failed), V.C. 64: four pairs near Hellifield, one pair near Clapham, 14 nests counted at Farnley Lake on 25th April (LGD. EJS), ten pairs near Ripon, six pairs (3.2.1) at three sites in upper Nidderdale (two unsuccessful). The Gargrave and Tadcaster birds were not counted.

Outside the breeding season, occurrences at many waters were normal.

Three flew north off Scalby Mills on 31st August (PD). Singles flew south at Withernsea on 18th and 26th September and 22nd October. Spurn had birds flying south in autumn with five on 29th July, singles on 2nd August and 6th September and birds were seen coming in over the sea; one on 21st August, two on 13th October and one on 27th October.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

One at Winterset Res. on 26th September flew in from the north-east (PS. GJS. JW. DW).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*

An adult male was at Wath Ings on 17th July (JH. NA. JMT. *et al*).

An adult male was at Horbury Flash during the last week of September (DY. RLB. JED. *et al*). It was caught and ringed on 30th September and photographed by JSA. and PS.

Both accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

One at Potteric Carr on 2nd March (RDM) and one at Kirkhouse Green on 23rd March (ML). One at Fairburn on 20th April. Seen regularly in the non-breeding season at Hornsea Mere with singles on five dates to 4th April and eight dates from 19th August to year-end (MN. JESW. RGH).

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

One flew north at Blacktoft Sands on 26th May (AG).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

One at Broughton, near Ingleby Greenhow on 11th and 12th July. The bird was an immature and was seen by D. J. Britton, J. E. Dale and several others. The first since 1852 and only the third record for Yorkshire.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

A bird was at Hornsea Mere from 23rd May to 6th June (absent on a few dates) and on 19th June, 18th and 31st July (RGH. *et al*).

One at Potteric Carr on 17th June (LJD), one at Staveley Lagoon on 19th June (RE. JRM. PTT) and one at Fairburn Ings on 22nd July and from 1st to 3rd August (SCM. *et al*).

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

One flew down Hornsea Mere on 15th May (HL. *et al*). The third record since 1912, the others being in 1973.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Inland occurrences followed the pattern of the past few years. There was some coastal movement, mainly south, recorded off Flamborough during September/December with 180 passing on 17th September. 565 flew north and 115 flew south off Hornsea on 19th December (SML).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

The first was at Fairburn Ings on 8th March which stayed to 4th April. Single drakes occurred during May on passage at several waters and several occurred in the autumn with seven at Swillington Ings on 15th August as maximum (JW). No breeding records reached me.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Hornsea Mere, traditionally the stronghold of this species, held large numbers. Monthly maxima were: 75 in January, 105 in February, 35 in March, 28 in April, 12 in May, 45 in June, 75 in July, 160 in August (29th), 160 in September (12th), 88 in October, 65 in November and 35 in December. There was no evidence of breeding.

At Fairburn Ings, numbers increased during mid-August to mid-October with 58 during last week of September as maximum. One pair nested and reared eight young from a brood of nine. Numbers at the many waters in V.C. 63 did not exceed eight on any one date though there were more records than for a few years.

**Wigeon *Anas penelope***

Large numbers occurred as usual on the Lower Derwent floods with up to 4000 during the first two counts, reducing to 60 by 11th April and 20 by 28th (GJW, GS). Three had returned by 10th August and numbers increased to 1000 by November and 2000 in December (GS). Hornsea Mere had up to 500-600 January to March and 80 to 190 during September to December. At Blacktoft Sands, hard weather brought in 220 on 31st January and 240 on 1st February. 570 were present on 22nd March. The first of autumn were seven on 6th August and 260 were present in hard weather on 26th December (AG). 1200 were at Cherry Cobb Sands on 8th February (NAB). The Humber Wildfowl Refuge count on 19th December produced 5574 on the saltings and a further 500 at Whitton village.

1150 flew north off Hornsea on 19th December (SMC). Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pit had 586 in February and 581 in December as maxima (GDM). Smaller numbers occurred at several other waters.

A duck with four young was at Grimwith Res. on 21st July. A few birds summered at some waters.

American Wigeon *Anas americana*

A first-year drake at Fairburn Ings from 24th July to 12th August was the first in the county this century (SCM. *et al*).

An immature was on Whitton Sands on 23rd September (DIMW).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

150 at Cherry Cob Sands on 8th February and 120 on 22nd February were the county's maxima. Hornsea Mere had 55 on 17th September as maximum and the Lower Derwent floods attracted maxima of 50 on 20th March and 70 at the year-end (GS). 29 flew north off Hornsea on 29th January. Birds flew south off Spurn in October with 20 on 4th, 17 on 6th, 25 on 12th and 10 on 17th as maxima. 47 flew north-west at Mappleton on 31st October.

Numbers elsewhere were small but records widespread in the non-breeding season.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A drake at Hornsea Mere on 11th July and a duck on 16th November (RGH). A duck at Bretton Park from 26th September to 2nd October (HL. DB). A duck at Thrybergh Banks from 31st October to 28th November (PC. *et al*), a duck at Wath Ings on 7th August (JH. JL. *et al*) and a very tame free-flying duck at Fairburn Ings from 15th August to 15th October. This latter joined the birds at the swan feeding bay and was doubtless an escape from a collection. Some of the other records probably were too and are published with that proviso.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Occurred at 19 waters in V.C. 63 and 16 waters in V.C. 64, mainly one to two birds but sometimes up to five and occasional larger numbers viz: three at Fairburn Ings on 1st February increased to six by 8th, ten by 14th and five thereafter to 23rd with two to three remaining to 22nd April and a female on 31st May. 11 were at Southfield Res. on 18th January, 23rd February and 22nd March but not on the intervening dates when up to five were sporadically present. 11 at the Hatfield Marina from 25th to 31st January may have been the same party. Seven were at Mickleton Ings on 17th April. Hornsea Mere attracted small numbers from January to May and September to year-end with 17 on 2nd February as an isolated peak. 100 flew north off Bridlington on 12th January and 125 north on 1st February with 150 of Fraisthorpe on 29th February. Coastal numbers elsewhere were traditionally small.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Breeding numbers were high in V.C. 63 with Denaby Ings producing *ca.* 200 young from *ca.* 30 pairs. 13 waters in the Barnsley/Wakefield area had 28 pairs and 125 young resulting. Breeding also occurred at Southfield Res., Sandbeck, Thrybergh Res., Langold and Redmires Res., five pairs rearing 33 young at the latter. V.C. 64 also had good numbers: 26 broods totalling 135 ducklings at Fairburn Ings, 165 ducklings on seven waters in Nidderdale, the most popular dale in the west. Malham Tarn had four ducks with 33 ducklings was at Swillington. Breeding in V.C. 65 was not adequately reported.

In the east of the county, Hornsea Mere only produced one brood of three. Two pairs bred at Tophill Low Res. and reared eight young.

Flocks outside the breeding season were large and followed the normal pattern for the county.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

A drake was at Hornsea Mere on 28th April, 2nd, 8th, 9th, 10th and 15th May and was a new species for the county list. On the intervening dates it may have visited another water (Tophill Low Res.?) or was overlooked. (RGH. IGH. AG. PAL. *et al*).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

A duck on John O'Gaunt's Res. from 17th to 24th January was no doubt the bird which was present in November and December 1974 (DJB. GTF. JRM. *et al*). Fairburn Ings had a

remarkable series of records: single drakes were present from 14th February to 2nd March, 31st May to 3rd June, 27th July to 31st August and a duck from 16th November to 18th December. The drakes were considered to be different individuals, based on plumage differences and bill markings (SCM. *et al*). A drake at Mickletown Flash on 17th April (SCM). A drake at Hornsea Mere on 8th and 9th May and duck on 9th June (RGH). A drake was at Bransholme on 10th October (JMcC. JH. LE).

A bird at Gouthwaite Res. on 18th January, identified as this species by some, was in fact showing characters of Padgett's Pochard, a recognised hybrid between Pochard and Ferruginous Duck (DJB). See note elsewhere in this report.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

One to six birds recorded off the coast between Filey and Flamborough from January to May and August to year-end and off Scarborough in October and November. Spurn had only one to four on seven dates from October to year-end.

Hornsea Mere had singles on seven dates in January and a duck through February and March to 29th April and one to two on several dates from 31st October to year-end. Tophill Low Res. had one to two on several dates from October to year-end. A drake was at Fairburn Ings on 18th March (SCM. *et al*).

A drake at Wath Ings from 30th October to 8th November (JH. *et al*), one at The Fleets, near Barnsley from 1st to 28th November and the same bird at Worsborough Res. from 28th November to 3rd December (PBW. MEB). A drake at Denaby Ings on 30th and 31st October.



Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Small numbers off the coast from January to May and July to year-end, usually low single figures except at Cornelian Bay, Scarborough, a favourite feeding place for sea ducks with from 19 to 27 present during January to late February (DJB. RHA. MF. *et al*). Ten flew north off Filey on 28th August. A marked increase in October with 11 off Flamborough on 28th and 20 flying north on 29th.

Spurn had a similar influx with 12 on the 27th, 22 on 28th, 22 on 29th and 33 on 30th, all flying south.

A female was on Knotford Nook Gravel Pit on 13th November (DMP. KM).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Coastal numbers were as in most recent years with October and November producing most records. Spurn had 133 on 27th October, 246 on 28th, 210 on 29th and 646 on 30th. 139 flew north off Flamborough on 29th October. 255 flew north off Hornsea on 26th July. Occurred elsewhere in parties of 50 to 100 at several watchpoints mainly from July to year-end. 185 were in Cornelian Bay on 30th November (MF).

Inland occurrences were again numerous and small numbers (up to seven) occurred at many waters in V.C.'s 63 and 64 from April to December, mainly from July. Exceptions were 11 at Swinsty Res. on 24th June and 13 at Winterset Res. from 19th–21st November. 70 were on the River Humber at Faxfleet on 19th December.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Occurred along the coast in small numbers from January to June and August to year-end. Filey, Flamborough and Hornsea were the most favoured localities. 13 at Scarborough on 7th January, ten at Filey on 29th February and 16 at Flamborough on 23rd March were maxima in early months. 33 off Hornsea on 28th and 33 at Flamborough on 20th November and 17 on the 18th. 29 flew north and 14 were in the sea off Hornsea on 19th December. 32 at Spurn on 28th October. Perhaps the same flock was involved in these last records.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Two at Worsborough Res. on 23rd September (PBW).

Published with the escape proviso but it is possible that we will start to get birds from the expanding feral population in the midlands.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Stocks Res. had a female and six ducklings on 4th July and all were successfully reared (JF).

Other inland occurrences were in all months except August, with May and October/November being the peak periods. Numbers were generally small, single birds being usual; four birds at Gouthwaite Res. on 14th April and at Winterset Res. on 25th September being maxima. Recorded from nine waters in V.C. 63 and nine in V.C. 64, an increase over the past four years.

Coastal records followed the same temporal pattern with 12 at Spurn on 3rd October and ten on 1st December as maxima.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Eccup Res. was by far the most popular water this year with maxima of 55 on 1st January, 84 on 24th February, 87 on 25th March, 37 on 1st April, 13 on 3rd May, 20 on 27th November and 89 on 28th December. Several other waters had their peak numbers in December when the cold weather froze birds off the smaller waters: 24 at Fairburn Ings on 10th, 25 at Lower Barden REs. on 18th, 39 on Chelker Res. and 61 at Leighton Res. on 31st. Numbers in the early months were generally smaller and Leighton had 42 on 7th February as maximum.

Chelker Res., Lower Barden Res. and Fairburn Ings had up to 20 birds during February. 39 were at Castle Howard Lake on 3rd January and 22 on 11th February. The many waters in V.C. 63 had very few with 12 at Winterset Res. on 7th February as maximum, and the majority having only low single figures.

Hornsea Mere had maxima of 20 on 20th January, 17 in mid-February and 13 on 23rd December. Coastal records were scarce and ten at Flamborough on 25th September was exceptional.

Single pairs were reported with broods of eight and nine in the Rivers Wharfe and Ure respectively.

Smew *Mergus albellus*

A welcome increase in records this year with one to two birds, mainly *redheads* reported from three waters and one coastal locality in V.C. 61, two waters in V.C. 62, six waters in V.C. 63 and five waters in V.C. 64: all records as follows:

V.C. 61; A drake at Hornsea Mere on 11th January, single *redheads* at Tophill Low Res. on 14th February, Catfoss Gravel Pit on 14th February with two there on 15th February, one flying south off Flamborough and two, then three flying north on 1st November.

V.C. 62; Single *redheads* at Throxenby Mere, Scarborough on 16th November and at Seamer Road Mere from 18th November to 3rd December.

V.C. 63; Drake at Thrybergh Res. from 31st January to 7th February, drake at Mickletown Ings from 8th to 15th February, single *redheads* at Wintersett Res. from 31st January to 8th February and 11th to 31st December. Two *redheads* at Southfield Res. on 31st February and one flying over Potteric Carr on 31st February. One at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 12th April was the only bird outside the periods January/February and November/December.

V.C. 64; *Redhead* at Leighton Res. on 30th January and 1st February, a drake on River Wharfe, near Ilkley on 12th February, Staveley Lagoon on 15th February, drake at Swillington Ings on 22nd February and at Fairburn Ings on 22nd February (probably the same bird) with single *redheads* on 8th February and 29th December. A *redhead* at Lindley Res. on 20th November.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A pair with eleven young at Wheldrake Ings on 31st May and a pair with nine young on 3rd July. 114 'creched' young at Blacktoft Sands on 23rd July where *ca.* 20 pairs nested (AG). One pair bred near Tophill Low Res., two young being present in early August. Coastal and inland occurrences were normal. 39 at Whiteholme Res. on 22nd July and 23 at Wath Ings on 15th December were the largest inland parties, most waters having single figures and a few up to *ca.* 15 mainly in May and in the autumn.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna furruginea*

One at Blacktoft Sands on 7th April and from 15th September to 10th October (AG). One at Whitton Sands on 27th August and a drake on 23rd September (DIMW).

Accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Two at Wheldrake Ings on 26th April (GS) and two on 18th September (GS.A. & JD). These birds may have originated at the York University Lake where there are free flying birds. Two were on the Lower Derwent on 26th April (GS) and one on 18th September (GS. AP). Full descriptions of these birds are still awaited.

All published with the escape proviso.

Grey-lag Goose *Anser anser*

30 flew north at Bempton on 24th February. The Hornsea Mere population peaked at 66 in March and 70 on 13th August with up to 55 during most other months. Seven pairs reared 30 goslings. 52 at Burton Constable on 10th January and 79 on East Park Lake, Hull on 15th January probably involved the same birds.

The Castle Howard flock numbered 28 on 18th January and 37 on 17th October with birds in all other months. 39 were at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. from 8th February to 13th March and 25 on 3rd April with 22 on 19th December. 15 were in the Staveley Lagoon area from 6th to 21st March with 16 from 27th November to 5th December. 16 flew south over Wintersett Res. on 6th June and several other waters had small numbers during the summer, obviously feral birds evidenced by one at Fairburn Ings from July to October which wore a W.A.G.B.I. ring.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

One at Withernessea on 1st February, two at Hornsea Mere on 19th and one at Long Nab, Burniston on 5th March were the only records in the early months.

One at Hornsea Mere on 28th October on which date seven were at Spurn Point. Records in the subsequent few days may have involved the same individuals: one at Hornsea Mere from 13th–22nd November and again from 27th–30th and from 5th–31st December. One at East Park Lake, Hull during late October and late December. Five in Beacon Lake, Kilnsea on 30th October and 15 at Weighton Lock on 25th December when two flew over Blacktoft Sands. Four were on stubble at Atwick on 8th November. Seven were at the Humber Wildfowl Refuge during November and two were shot on the 1st. A head was sent for examination and proved to be an adult of the European race (per A.Ch.). One at Staveley Lagoon on 13th November and at Givendale, near Ripon from 14th to 28th November. One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. with Greylags on 30th December.

Correction to 1975 Report: Delete "and two were at Castle Howard Lake on 2nd November (BGP. *et al*)".

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus*

An adult joined the Canada Goose flock at Fairburn Ings on 15th May and stayed until the 18th (SCM. *et al*). What was presumably the same bird was at Adel Dam, Leeds on 19th May and again on 4th June and at Harewood about the same time. One at York University Lake on several days in May and at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th May have been the same bird.

Details of the Fairburn Ings record have been submitted to the County Records Committee and to *British Birds*. Full information on the other records would have helped to ascertain if only one individual was involved. Published with the escape proviso.

These are the first records of this rare arctic goose since the 19th century when one was 'taken near York'.

Bean Goose *Anser fabilis*

One at Hornsea Mere on 28th October (CHW) and two at Kilnsea on 30th October with one next day (JED, MT). Four were at Cromer Point near Scarborough on 2nd November (JWe). One at Weighton Lock on 25th December (DIMW) and 15 were at Blacktoft Sands on 25th December finally flying off down the Humber (AG).

There are several past records of this species under review or awaiting descriptions and these will receive full treatment in due course.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

420 were on Whitton Sands on 18th January. The Humber Refuge population (after a peak of 1080 birds on 7th October 1975) never exceeded 340 birds during January and 430 during February. 160 arrived on 24th February and departed to the north-west two days later.

The first autumn birds arrived in Holderness on 13th September and the Humber Wildfowl Refuge had a peak count of 700 on 20th October.

Occurrences elsewhere followed the usual pattern of skeins of up to 250 birds passing over several areas, mainly in the south-east during February and again during October to December, coinciding with arrivals in the Humber area. Skeins in excess of 250 were 350 north-west over Selby on 7th January (PR) on which date 550 flew east over Hull. 476 came in high over the sea in six parties at Hornsea from 0725 hours to 0740 hours on 13th October (WFC).

A few single birds summered with Canada flocks.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

A blue phase bird arrived at Staveley Lagoon with 14 Canada Geese on 3rd June and was present next day (RE. PTT. *et al*). What was probably the same bird was at Gouthwaite Res. from 13th to 23rd June (AFGW). Three were present at the latter locality from the end of June to the 11th December when one left, two remaining until the 28th. What was no doubt the missing Gouthwaite bird was at Givendale, near Ripon from 17th–19th December (BT). One was on York University Lake from 20th June to the end of July (CBT). Published with the escape proviso.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Another good year, as in 1975 and both spring and autumn records were above average: occurred daily on the Humber at Spurn up to 7th April with maxima of 17 in early January, increasing to 29 by 17th and to month-end with 32 on 25th, 34 on 7th February, 41 on 8th, 42 on 9th, 45 on 21st (including 22 first-year birds), 48 on 22nd and 53 on 29th. Numbers fell to 25 by mid-March with up to 12 during early April, 10 on 1st May and five on 5th. One occurred on 10th July.

16 were at Hornsea Mere on 30th January and 36 flew south off Bridlington on 3rd February. 12 were at Easington on 22nd February and 25 at Skeffling on 7th March. 26 flew down the Humber on 13th February.

The first two autumn birds were at Spurn on 25th September with small numbers to year-end with 17 as maximum. 58 flew north in one party off Filey on 27th October and 55 were off Flamborough on 28th October. There were several other records along the coast during this period involving low single figures.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

There are many feral birds in the county now and most inland records refer to such individuals. Birds of more genuine origin were ten at Spurn and four at Easington on 30th October and 14 on 31st which remained at Kilnsea until 5th November. Five at Hornsea Mere daily during January to mid-May were likely feral (see Reports for 1974 and 1975).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

More records than for some years with some herds of good size: 60 at Fairburn Ings on 1st January was the largest flock with numbers dropping to 15–25 during late February and six in late March. 11 grazed by the River Nidd at Walshford Bridge during February/March. Moving birds re-appeared at Fairburn in April with 18 on 7th and four remaining to 18th. Two injured birds summered and were joined by a third adult from 7th to 19th May. Mickletown Ings had 15–16 in late January and early February and Almholme had 14 up to 19th February with 17 on 22nd. Most birds had left by mid-April with one at Winterset Res. on 26th.

One summered with Canada Geese on the Lower Derwent and there were three at Wheldrake on 3rd August. First autumn influx was in mid-October and many waters had transient birds during the last months of the year. 30 had gathered at Fairburn Ings by mid-November and 20–30 were present to year-end with a peak of 53 on 29th December; only one juvenile was present indicating a poor breeding season.

Other maxima at the year-end were 30 in North Bay, Scarborough on 1st November, 22 over Ilton Moor on 2nd November, 11 at Almholme on 13th November, 15 at Bentley Tilts on 20th November, 15 at Swinefleet on 13th December, 11 at Ringstone Edge on 4th December and 13 on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 18th and 19th December.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus bewickii*

22 at Fairburn Ings on 25th January was an isolated peak. 16 at Blacktoft Sands on 31st January, 23 at Southfield Res. on 2nd February and 22 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 16th and 17th March. 60 flew over Wath Ings on 15th March, 11 of which landed in a field. Numbers on the Lower Derwent were 53 on 10th February, 79 on 21st February, 180 in late February and 125 on 20th March.

Five flew south off Flamborough on 17th October with five at Fairburn Ings next day. 28 came in from the east at Lumley Moor Res. at the *end of October* and 25 flew north-west over Harrogate on 31st. 22 were on the Lower Derwent on 1st November with 67 on 12th increasing to 78 by the year-end. 39 were at Ingbirchworth Res. on 31st December. Several other suitable waters had smaller numbers during these periods.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

A large eagle, submitted as this species by the observer was watched for five minutes as it flew in a south-easterly direction over Almholme on 19th September (RJR). There are several species of eagle kept in captivity in Britain and the origin of this bird must be suspect.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

15 pairs reared 22 young in the Sedbergh area (some of these were in Cumbria).

Coastal birds on the move were two over Flamborough Head on 4th April, and one at Spurn on 16th April and one at Hornsea Mere on 24th April. One at Spurn on 28th September and 31st October, one at Scarborough on 3rd October, one at Hornsea Mere on 6th October and at Winestead on 31st October.

An increasing number of records in the west with good numbers appearing on the low ground of the foothills in autumn; four were near Sawley during mid to late summer, five were at Staveley from 25th August to 18th September including a very pale bird with a dark tail band, singles were at Farnham on 29th August, Fairburn on 18th September, South Milford on 19th September, Eccup Res. on 26th September, Fulford, near York on 25th September and Fairburn on 10th October. Singles were at Thorne Moors on 5th November and 11th December and at Blacktoft Sands on 28th November.

Records along the edge of the Pennines were too numerous to list and one to three birds were seen at *ca.* 25 localities during the non-breeding season.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Up to three birds in Bransdale during February and two on 7th March (DJB. *et al*). One in the Langsett/Broomhead Moor area between 16th and 26th February (RW. *et al*). One on Howden Moor on 7th March (DM). One near Upper Midhope on 13th November (DM. AB. AD).

Singles at Atwick on 20th October (WFC). Patrington on 31st October (DIMW), Kilnsea on 7th November and Hornsea on 5th November (RGH).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Birds considered to be migrants were seen at Bempton on two dates in April and two in September, at Flamborough in April, three on one day in May, and on one date in September and five in October.

Spurn had birds flying south on 20th March, 10th and 11th April, 1st May, 24th August and on ten dates in September, October and end of November.

Records elsewhere were most encouraging with continued increase of sightings and confirmed breeding with family parties in the air together, mainly in September and October.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Reported from at least 16 localities in the county during the year, mainly during the non-breeding season.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

One was found dead at Scagglethorpe, near Malton in April and was inspected by Col. J. F. Newman before being sent away for an autopsy.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Birds passed through the county during June with singles flying south over Hornsea Mere (PD) and Spurn on 1st, Potteric Carr on 9th (CHW), and Redmires Res. on 20th (KC. *et al*).

Two flew south-east near Treeton on 26th August (DJG), one over Spurn on 29th August, one flying north on 18th September, on present from 21st–23rd September and one on 6th October which left to the south on the 7th. Singles over Hornsea on 16th September, 18th September and 7th October (RGH. WFC). One at Winterset Res. on 2nd September (PS. GJS) and over Lodge Moor, Sheffield on 18th September (RAF. MET). One flew south-west over Fairburn Ings on 1st October (SCM).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A total of 32 different individuals was identified at Blacktoft Sands between 12th April and 10th October (AG. *et al*). Hornsea Mere had one from 7th–9th April, singles on 11th, 16th and 22nd May with two on 12th, singles on 5th and 20th June and a juvenile on 15th August (RGH. *et al*).

Singles were seen at Saltmarsh on 2nd May, Broomfleet on 27th May, Welton Water on 16th June and 23rd June (DIMW. MC). A female coasting north at Cayton Bay on 28th April (SCM). One near Settle on 25th April (EDJ). A female over Danby Low Moor on 8th May (AP. FJT), a male at Southfield Res. on 8th May (CW) and a female at Tophill Low Res. from 8th–11th May and 14th August (PWI. *et al*). One at Wath Ings on 24th October (JH. *et al*).

Three birds passed through the Lower Derwent in spring. One near Upper Midhope on 8th May (ACB. AD). One at Staveley Lagoon on 4th and 8th May and over Harrogate on 7th May (PTT. RE. GTF). Fairburn Ings had singles on 9th May, 17th August and 10th October (SCM. *et al*). Singles passed at Spurn on 18th May, 30th May, with three on 30th May and singles on 20th June, 13th August and 6th October. All were flying south except the one in August.



Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

V.C. 61: Some obvious passage during May and October with a few records in November and December. Birds frequented the Hornsea Mere area on 9th, 30th and 31st October with singles almost daily during November with two on 7th/8th and again daily to 26th December.

Spurn had one, sometimes two, regularly from 19th October to the end of November. Some were seen passing south offshore: singles on 24th October, 7th, 14th and 20th November. Flamborough had an adult male on 2nd October and singles were seen along the Humber estuary at four places during October to December.

V.C. 62: One at Helwath Beck on 26th July, and one at Acaster Malbis on 13th November and in Bransdale in February and April (AW) were the only records received but there must have been many more.

V.C. 63: Regularly at Blacktoft Sands from 21st March to 9th May and 12th September to year-end with an adult male from 3rd–9th May and two *ringtails* from 18th–31st December. Thorne Moors had two *ringtails* on 23rd October and records in November and December.

V.C. 64: Birds recorded regularly in the west and in Nidderdale and Wharfedale, mainly singly during the non-breeding season. One at Cockett Moss on 25th April. Singles were at Ripley on 9th October, Staveley Lagoon on 30th October and Fairburn Ings on 11th December.

V.C. 65: No records.

Some pairs bred in the county.

Montague's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

A female in Wharfedale on 22nd May (PMW. AW) and a juvenile at Hornsea Mere on 10th October (RGH). A male flew south at Spurn on 18th September.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Spring records were singles at Fewston Res. on 8th May (KM), Thruscross Res. on 10th–11th May (GTF) (probably same bird), Knotford Nook G.P. on 12th May (BR) and over Scarborough on 13th May (MT), Ingbirchworth Res. on 1st June (RF) and Winterset Res. on 18th June (AP). One over Hawksworth Moor on 8th May (ADW).

There were several autumn records with an early bird over Blubberhouses Moor on 4th July (DMP). One at Castle Howard Lake on 18th September (DW), over Norwood Edge on 26th September (KM), one at Langsett Res. from 18th–26th September, one at Pike Low, near Langsett on 28th (DM) (probably same bird) and one at Langsett on 20th October. One came in over the sea at Flamborough Head on 3rd October (JGH) and one was in the Driffield/Wansford area from 3rd–20th October (PD). One at Stocks Res. on 2nd October (JF), one at Eccup Res. from 8th to 18th October (CGV. IHD *et al*). A juvenile at Lindley Res. from 22nd–29th October (DMP. KM. *et al*), one over Blubberhouses Moor on 13th November (JA) and one at Swinsty Res. on 11th December (FAW).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

V.C. 61: Single birds recorded at Spaldington on 31st May, Bempton on 8th June (flying south), Hornsea Mere on 20th June, 21st July, 15th August and 15th October, Flamborough Head from 27th September to 4th October. Spurn had singles south on 5th and 6th June, two south on 12th June and singles on 5th October, 9th October and 27th October.

V.C. 63: One in the south of the county during June. One on Thorne Moors on 9th June. Singles at Potteric Carr on 9th June, Winterset Res. on 31st July, Hornell Wood on 1st August, Fly Flatts Res. and Worsborough Res. on 30th August.

V.C. 64: One at Fairburn on 18th and 26th May and on 24th June, Farnham G.P. on 6th September and Staveley Lagoon on 30th September.

V.C. 65: One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. from 20th to 25th August.

Addition to 1975 Report: One at Bentley, near Doncaster on 27th September.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Four pairs nested in the county; two were robbed and two were successful.

V.C. 61: Singles at Hornsea on 26th January (WFC), Flamborough Head on 3rd April (PAL. IS), Hornsea on 15th December (WFC). Spurn had singles on 19th April and 23rd September.

V.C. 62: Only two records, one on the North York Moors on 23rd May (AJD) and one on the coast on 23rd December (RHA).

V.C. 63: Singles on Thorne Moors on 17th January, 13th February and 22nd February (CHW. ML. FG), Winterset Res. on 31st May (PS. *et al*), Broomhead Moor on 26th December (IF), Ewden Valley on 27th December (JED) and one at Yateholme, near Holmfirth on 5th December (GW).

V.C. 64: Singles seen in Wharfedale on 15th January, 3rd April, 16th August (two sites), 31st August, 8th September and 28th November, Upper Nidderdale area on 17th March, 18th March, 19th and 23rd October, 9th and 20th November, 27th and 28th November and 28th December. One flew over Harrogate on 18th March (PJC) and one over Pannal, near Harrogate on 10th October (GTF).

V.C. 65: One at Hawes in March (PTT).

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

13 proved breeding pairs were reported from the moors of the western half (three were robbed, three were unsuccessful and seven reared young).

Outside the breeding season, reported regularly from all areas with up to four on Hatfield Moor during October to December.

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*

One at Winterset Res. from 28th August to 1st September (GJS. PS. JSA).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Relatively common in all areas (breeding evidence of 30 pairs in the Huddersfield, Barnsley and Doncaster areas).

Strong southerly passage of immature birds at Flamborough Head from 24th September to 24th October (PAL. *et al*) with a maximum of 25 on 25th September (AG) and numbers of *ca.* 20 on several other days. Four were catching exhausted migrant passerines on 28th October (DIMW).

Evidence of autumn movement along the coast was also noted at Bempton, Mappleton, Hornsea, Withernsea, and Spurn where there were 19 on 16th August, 14 on 26th September, 30 on 6th October and 18 on 9th November.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

100 on Pott Moor, near Leighton Res. on 26th July was a large party for this time of year and a hen had a large brood of 14 there on 8th July (PY).

Shooting results from Midhope Moors during the last three years were 1000 brace in 1974, 600 brace in 1975 and 400 brace in 1976 (per RWe).

A white bird was near Hebden Biidge on 30th October (RW).

Black Grouse *Lyrurus tetrix*

The Langstrothdale population was still high and 40 birds were counted on 28th February and 26 males at one lek on 10th April (GTF). Six males and five females at Stocks Res. in February/March (JF). 12 males and two females near Settle on 13th February and nine males and three females near Tosside in December (BS). Eight males and two females near

Malham Tarn on 17th May (PMW). A female near Dent Station on 6th June (BS). Three females near Tan Hill on 24th April and three near Semerwater on 15th April (GHA). A male on Colsterdale Moor on 6th November (PY) and a male shot near Angram in Upper Nidderdale in late autumn (per MGHG).

A female was on the moors in V.C. 63 on 7th March but not seen again (DH. DG).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

There seems to be some expansion of range to the west with birds penetrating up the foot-hill valleys: two at Ellastring on 5th April were the upper limit in Wensleydale (GEA). Two were on the edge of Skelding Moor on 4th April and two on Grewelthorpe Moor on 16th April (850' a.s.l.) (MRS. JO). Single birds sat on stone walls at Bishopside on 7th May and at Skell Bridge (900' a.s.l.) on 13th June. One near Angram Res. on 29th June (MGHG).

Birds in the south of the county did well and some good coveys were reported in the Southfield Res. area in August (2 of 12 each) and 28 birds at Thrybergh on 25th January. 30 were on Hatfield Moor on 20th December and an adult and 19 chicks were in Moss Valley on 11th July. Three brace were shot near Nostell, a new locality. 25 were shot near Ellington (near Masham) in October (PY).

Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The general impression in several areas was that the breeding season was a good one. There were many coveys of up to 30 reported but the largest coveys were in the south; 50 at Wath on 1st January and 60 on 22nd August with 100 plus on 4th December, 51 at Worsborough on 24th January, 40 on Thorne Moor on 26th January, 43 at Winterset on 15th February, *ca.* 100 at High Melton on 12th October, 48 at Blacktoft Sands on 26th January. 53 were at Mappleton on 5th December and 60 at Almholme on 31st December.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

One at Greenfields, Langthorpe on 30th May (AS. AT). One at Agden on 22nd June (DH. DG), one at Swinden, Langsett on 28th June (JED), two at Broadstones, near Ingbirchworth on 23rd July (DB) and at Ingbirchworth from 23rd July to 3rd August (JMD. HL. *et al*).

One was calling at Bampton Cliffs Car Park on 1st and 2nd July (DGH. JF). Three were calling in the Scar House/Angram area in Upper Nidderdale on 4th July (MRS. JO. AFGW. *et al*). One called from barley at Hutton Magna, near Richmond from 2nd June to 9th August (GDM).

Crane *Grus grus*

One at Almholme on 15th and 16th April (DJB. DS. JMD. *et al*). One on flooded fields near Owston Wood and Bentley Tilts from 14th to 16th April. It was seen to leave to the north at 0715 hours on the latter date (DP. PG). One at Leighton Res. on 30th May landed on the moor (PIC).

Three, including a juvenile, flew north at Spurn on 29th October, alighted in Kilnsea then continued north.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

It is difficult to prove breeding for this secretive species and only one pair was seen with chicks, at Blacktoft Sands in June. Hornsea Mere and Fairburn Ings could furnish no such proof. The population at Blacktoft Sands was *ca.* 30 during January and a September increase to 25 on 10th December (AG). Numbers are swollen by immigrants in September/October.

Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana*

One at Fairburn Ings on 8th February (SCM), one on Thorne Moors on 6th March (MS. CHW), one at Flamborough on 21st March (PAL. IS), on at Spurn on 2nd May. One at Hornsea Mere from 11th to 24th August (CG. NR. GED. *et al*). One at Sutton-in-Craven on 10th October (EG).

Corncrake *Crex crex*

Single birds were calling at Storwood Ings in V.C. 61 on 30th May (HOB), Hetchell, near Leeds on 14th May (JHF), Goole on 18th June (PD) and Wood Hall on the River Wharfe on 21st July (NMW).

One was at Blacktoft Sands on 9th and 10th September (RJR. AG).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Winterset Res. had record numbers of 750 on 4th January and 515 on 12th December. Hornsea Mere's maximum was 1100 in June and the Warden reported a very successful breeding season. Becoming more numerous in Nidderdale with flocks assembling on the gravel pits in the lower dale.

At least 45 pairs nested at Fairburn Ings where the maxima were 930 on 22nd August and 958 on 9th October. 950 on Malham Tarn on 3rd January (MVB). Most other suitable waters held flocks of up to 300 during the autumn and winter months.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Occurred normally throughout the county. The origin of a dead bird at the 'Narrow Neck' at Spurn on 31st December can only be conjectured.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Passage at inland waters was much in evidence with small numbers recorded from 14 waters in V.C. 63 between January and May and at many other sites in the county. Maxima were 21 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 22nd February and 29 on 29th and 43 at Settle (Morley's Pool) on 1st March.

Cornelian Bay, Scarborough held 245 on 18th February (FAW). Other coastal flocks and movements were normal.

Autumn produced records from many areas, usually low single figures but some large parties: two parties (21 and seven) flew west at Southfield Res. on 4th August. 32 flew west at Goole on 31st July, 30 at Wath Ings on 21st December (17 in from east, two over north-east, 11 in from south), 31 at Nosterfield G.P. on 23rd July.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Occurrences were similar to last year with maximum flocks of up to 1000 birds scattered all over the county during the non-breeding season. Post-breeding flocks were assembled as early as late June. There were 38 flocks in excess of 1000 and eight in excess of 2000 mainly in V.C. 64. Larger flocks were 4000 at Birkin Pond on 17th January (SML), 3400 were at Bewholme in V.C. 61 on 2nd February (WFC) and at Staveley Lagoon there were 4000 on 18th September and 6307 counted flying west on 5th December (PTT).

277 came in over the sea at Easington on 9th October on which day 447 flew north-west at Spurn. Smaller numbers were seen coming in around this period along the coast and 485 flew south at Spurn on 16th October. Cold weather movements were noted on 25th January when 2830 passed south-west over Knaresborough Ringing Station up to mid-day, 2572 flew west over Winterset Res. and 2300 over Wath. The movement was in progress all over the Leeds area with small parties passing all day.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Bred inland at the following places: near Catterick, one pair (GDM), near Settle, one pair (PMW. BS), near Nosterfield, one pair (AFGW), Grimwith Res., four pairs (MVB) and Stocks Res., one pair. A pair also bred at Stocks in 1975 (JF). Four pairs bred at Welton Water (DIMW).

Passage through the county occurred during February to October with records coming from many waters, mainly in V.C. 63 and mainly during April/May and August/September/October. Some maxima were 13 at Swinsty Res. on 6th May, 30 at Wath Ings on 29th May, 18 at Fairburn Ings on 22nd May and 30 at Blacktoft Sands on 19th August. Numbers elsewhere did not exceed ten.

Coastal records included maxima of 50 at Welton Waters on 18th September with 76 on 7th September. 80 at Whitton Sands on 27th August and 75 on 17th September and 125 at Cherry Cobb Sands on 24th May. 63 were on the Humber mud at Spurn from 21st–23rd August and 90 on 20th September.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Breeding records were:

V.C. 61; only two pairs at two sites with a third pair at another with four flying juveniles.

V.C. 62; one pair displaying at one site but not proved.

V.C. 63; 17 pairs had some degree of success and a further 11 pairs were displaying at other sites but breeding not proved.

V.C. 64; at least 23 pairs at 13 sites and a further two pairs not proved.

V.C. 65; one pair not proved at one site.

First to return was one at Wath Ings on 19th March. 20 were at Wath Ings on 5th May and 27th July. A few birds remained up to the last week of September with the last at Fairburn Ings on 2nd October.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Two at Stanley S.F. near Wakefield on 6th May (DW).

One on Whitton Sands on 2nd September (DIMW).

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

An exceptional year for inland occurrences with birds occurring at 13 waters in V.C. 63 in January/February and April to October and at eight waters in V.C. 64 during the same periods and also in November and December. Numbers involved were usually singles or low single figures but maxima were 14 at Wath Ings on 19th September and 12 on 18th September. Nine at Fairburn Ings on 18th September and again on 17th October. Seven were at Wheldrake Ings on 18th September, clearly a day of inland movement. 18 flew south of Withernsea on same date. Coastal numbers were normal with up to 20 to 30 birds at a few places along the Humber shore in the autumn and winter months. Spurn had maxima of 64 in October, 60 in November and 70 in December. 50 flew east at Flamborough on 25th September.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

A normal pattern of records with localities and numbers involved as during the last few years. There were many flocks of over 1000 birds including 1150 at Bewholme in V.C. 61 on 2nd November and 1300 at North Howden on 21st November. 1500 at Brampton, near Rotherham on 20th November was the largest count in V.C. 63. 2300 at Menwith Hill, near Harrogate on 3rd November, 2000 at Swillington during the early months and 1500 near Leeds (Thorner Lane End) in early April which was dominated by birds showing characters of the Northern race, as were several April flocks.

Dotterel *Eudromius morinellas*

Becoming more numerous as a passage bird through the county. Nine were at Lissett on 11th May (CEK. GM. CV). Two were at Spurn on 22nd August, one flew south on 18th September and two were seen later at Chalk Bank, one of which remained to 21st September. Seven were on Roils Head Playing Fields, near Halifax from 10th to 14th May, with two present on 15th (JACK). One was at 700 metres near the summit of a hill in the west on 25th April (BPA).

Addition to 1975 Report: Three on Danby Moor in V.C. 62 on 15th May (NWH).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Occurred all along the coast in small numbers with the maximum concentration at Cornelian Bay, south of Scarborough and at Spurn. The former locality had 235 on 17th February as its largest count and Spurn had maxima of 103 in March, 200 in April, 74 in May, 14 in June, 90 in July and 200 to 250 thereafter to November. 100 were at Cromer Point on 23rd April, 100 were on the south pier at Bridlington on 24th September and Filey Brigg had 100 on 9th October.

Two were picking at a Razorbill corpse on Scarborough north beach on 5th February, a period of hard frost (JWe).

Inland occurrences were numerous: spring records came from 11 places, mainly singly but two at two sites and mainly during the period 5th to 8th May when birds were at nine waters. In the autumn, 12 places had birds, again mainly singly but nine at Fairburn Ings on 19th September and 15 flying west near Barnsley on 18th November.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

One in summer plumage at Staveley Lagoon on 23rd May (RE). One in transitional plumage at John O'Gaunt's Res. from 30th August to 11th September (MFB. JRM. *et al*). One in almost complete winter plumage at Farnham G.P. from 23rd October to 7th November (RE. AFGW. *et al*). One individual may have been involved.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

The usual autumn build-up with concentrations at suitable places, depending on water levels and suitability of mud for feeding. Gatherings of up to 50 to 100 birds were frequent. Maxima were 200 at Gouthwaite Res. on 1st September, 475 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 24th October, 200-300 at Wath Ings Broomhill Flash between 26th September and 15th October and 300 at Fairburn Ings on 9th October, the latter on new flashes created by heavy rain. 130 at Flamborough on 24th November.

Great Snipe *Capella media*

One at Weighton Lock on 28th August (DIMW).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minima*

Birds lingered up to the third week of April at a few places, the last being at Wath Ings on 2nd May.

The first of autumn was on the exceptionally early date of 13th August at Potteric Carr but the bird was seen well by seven observers. The next and normal bird was at Spurn on 18th September whereafter the species was widespread by October. Maxima were up to 11 at Adwick-le-Street on 8th November, nine at Wath Ings on 7th November and eight at Kirkhamgate S.F. on 27th December.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Many records along the coast during October when immigrants were arriving. One flew along Franklin Street, in Scarborough town centre on 28th (MF). Flamborough Head had 55 on 29th and 27 on 30th indicating a heavy arrival (DIMW. *et al*). This was evidenced elsewhere with 15 in two fields at Mappleton on 31st (WFC) and seven at Hollis Recreation Ground, Hornsea on 30th. Three were watched coming in over the sea at Spurn on 30th and ten more were on the peninsula.

18 pairs bred at six sites in the Barnsley area and ten pairs were in the Huddersfield area.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Birds passed through the county from April to September, peaking in May and July/August. Inland records were mainly of one or two birds, but up to five at a few places. Larger numbers occurred in coastal areas: 11 south at Scalby Mills on 24th July, seven at Hornsea Mere on 31st August, five south at Flamborough on 24th August and six at Cherry Cobb Sands on 4th July, ten on 19th and 15 on 18th. Spurn had the highest counts with up to 14 almost daily during May. From 12 to 38 birds regularly near Kilnsea from 14th July to 14th August with maximum of 44 on 31st July. Several birds passed south during August/September. On 1st May a leucistic bird was seen at Spurn which was white except for a buff wash on the mantle and wing coverts.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

More records than in 1975.

V.C. 61; one to two birds recorded at Hornsea (January), Burniston, Patrington Haven and Cherry Cobb Sands (February, September and October), Tophill Low Res. (March, April and May), Hornsea Mere (May and July), Whitton Sands (July), Easington (October) and Burniston (November). Five at Cherry Cobb Sands on 9th July and eight at the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 26th September with six on 5th October.

V.C. 62; no records.

V.C. 63; one to two birds at Blacktoft Sands from 19th April to 6th May with four on 29th April. Two on 24th June and singles in July and August. Singles at Wath Ings in April, Balby Carr and Doncaster in May, Potteric Carr and Blackmoorfoot Res. in July and August and Harthill and Stanley S.F. in September.

V.C. 64; singles at Fairburn Ings on three early April dates, five on 19th and two on 6th/7th May. Two near Ripon on 9th April, two at Staveley Lagoon on 2nd May and one on 2nd September, one at Swillington Ings on 17th April, one at Eccup Res. on 20th July and one at Knotford Nook G.P. on 20th December.

V.C. 65; one at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 2nd May.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A good passage inland during May with Blacktoft Sands having nine on 2nd, 16 on 6th, 33 on 7th (all flying east) as maxima. Fairburn Ings had three on 20th April and three on 6th May, Staveley Lagoon had five on 2nd May and two on 4th and 7th May with one on 11th. Three at Stocks Res. on 4th May. Two were at Elsecarr Res. on 22nd April and two at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 25th.

Autumn records were numerous too; Blacktoft Sands had birds from 6th July to 30th October, eight on 2nd September and 16 on 7th September being maxima. From one to four occurred at seven waters in V.C. 63 and two in V.C. 64 during July to October with one near Settle on 15th December.

The Humber estuary held good numbers with 544 counted on 22nd February (from Spurn to Goole) and 238 on 19th December. The Whitton Sands area had 27 on 17th September, 50 on 19th and 30 on 23rd as maxima. 50 were at Cherry Cobb Sands on 17th October. Spurn had 50 on 9th April and 70 on 24th as maxima in the early months and an unprecedented total of 900 birds flew south on 21st December.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

V.C. 61; had birds in April and May with singles at Flamborough, Winestead, Wheldrake and Tophill Low and three at Hornsea Mere and Swillington Ings on 8th/9th May. In autumn there were singles at Faxfleet Pond, Cherry Cobb Sands, Filey Brigg, Tophill Low Res. and Lissett with two at Flamborough on 14th August. Spurn had one from 31st August to 17th September with three on 12th and two on 15th.

V.C. 62; one near Scalby on 16th May and 12th September and one near Osmotherly on 19th August.

V.C. 63; singles at four sites in April and May with one in song and displaying from 15th to 17th May. Occurred singly on eight dates at five localities in autumn with two at Catcliffe Flash from 9th to 22nd August.

V.C. 64; recorded singly from three sites in April/May with three at Fairburn Ings from 7th to 10th May. Autumn records came from three sites with birds on several dates from 27th June to 28th September with a maximum of two.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos*

One in the Elland G.P. area up to 25th February (SH. *et al*). One at Lindley Res. on several dates up to late February (PJC. DMP) and from 10th October to year-end (KM. FAW. *et al*).

Occurred normally from the first at Eccup Res. on 25th March and four at Aldwarke in V.C. 63 and one at Fairburn Ings on 28th to the last at Fairburn Ings on 23rd October and Stainforth S.F. on 24th.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Several birds wintered inland, a habit which has become more regular during the past few years. The Ribble Valley, near Settle held the largest numbers as usual with 60 on 12th January, 21 on 18th February, most birds leaving during a cold spell, 48 on 29th March and 40 on 4th April as migrants passed through. There were up to 18 at the year-end from mid-October (BSh).

Cornelian Bay, now the favoured haunt of many waders, attracted a maximum of 335 on 18th February (FAW).

2575 were along the shore of the Humber from Spurn to Goole on 22nd February, mainly in the Patrington/Easington section.

There were many breeding pairs reported, an indication of a good season.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Pattern of occurrence was normal with small numbers, mainly singly, but up to four passing through the county during late April to June at ten localities. There were more in autumn from early July to end of September with one to two birds reported from nine coastal and 26 inland localities. Maxima were up to six on several days at Fairburn Ings during August/September, four at Cherry Cobb Sands on 4th September and up to four at Wath Ings during early September.

There were a few occurrences on scattered dates during October with one at Stone Creek on the Humber on 7th November and one at Hornsea Mere on the 21st.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Single birds in January at Fairburn Ings and Hay-a-Park G.P. with three at Elland G.P. on 29th. One at Firth Hill G.P. and two at Hatfield Marina on 6th May. Autumn birds were more numerous and one to two were recorded at seven waters in V.C. 63, three in V.C. 64 and one in V.C. 65. The heavy gales of 11th/12th September brought in five at Blackmoor-foot Res. and two at Gouthwaite Res. on the 11th and four at Staveley Lagoon and six at Winterset Res. on the 12th.

Coastal records were normal with up to 2000 at Spurn during October to December. The

Humber Estuary count from Spurn to Goole on 19th December gave a total of 6416 birds. 220 were in Cornelian Bay on 18th February.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Cornelian Bay had 100 on 18th February and 130 on 15th March (FAWh). 300 were on Filey Brigg at dusk on 17th January (ML. MS) with 200 on 14th February (ML), 100 on 14th November and 180 on 20th November as maxima. Other maxima were 30 in Jackson's Bay, Scalby on 10th March (JWe) and 22 on 25th April (DJB); 20 at Bridlington on 1st February and 45 at Flamborough Head on 4th April (PAL).

Single birds occurred at Spurn on 19th April and nine dates in autumn with two on 25th October and four flying south offshore on 23rd October.

The only inland bird was at Blackmoorfoot Res. from 12th to 18th August (DB. et al).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Only two occurred in spring; one at Spurn on 2nd May and one at Nosterfield G.P. (V.C. 64) on 6th May (CS).

Autumn birds were numerous and records came from nine places in V.C. 61, surprisingly none in V.C. 62, 14 in V.C. 63, ten in V.C. 64 and one in V.C. 65. Inland, Blackmoorfoot Res. had up to six in September, eight at Chelker Res. on 18th September with six next day, five remaining up to 23rd, six at Gouthwaite Res. from 29th–31st August. Elsewhere, numbers were low single figures and occurred mainly from late August to late September with a second peak in early October.

Coastal and estuarine records involved more birds; Hornsea Mere had 13 on 21st and 19 on 23rd September and eight on 1st and 2nd October (RGH), 11 were on Whitton Sands on 20th September with 24 on 21st and nine on 24th (DIMW). The first autumn bird was at Hornsea Mere on 24th July and a late bird was caught and ringed at Adwick-le-Street S.F. on 12th November.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Single birds at Tophill Low Res. on 17th/18th May (PWI. DEM. et al) and 29th/30th May (DEM. BF. et al). One at Hornsea Mere on 28th May (RL. DB), one at Faxfleet Pond on 28th August (DIMW) and one on Whitton Sands on 22nd September (DIMW).

One was at Blacktoft Sands on 27th August (AG). One at Whiteholme Res. on 8th June (DAL). One came into Staveley Lagoon with Dunlin during the gales of 12th September (MFB. PTT. et al).

(One published in the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust report from Wheldrake Ings as present in midsummer was not substantiated by a description to the Y.N.U. Records Committee and must remain in doubt as a Little Stint was claimed by an independent observer on 28th June.)

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

One at Ross Carrs, Selby on 6th August (PR). One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 25th August (GDM).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The Humber Estuary counts from Spurn to Goole showed large numbers present with 16,630 on 22nd February and 16,835 on 19th December. Common in the estuary except for midsummer with 1800 on Whitton Sands on 14th March, 1130 on 4th May, 1100 on 9th May falling to 250 by 31st May. 250 returned by 24th July, 2000 on 23rd September and 600–800 to year-end. 850 were in Cornelian Bay on 18th February. 1000 were at Blacktoft Sands in May.

Recorded inland in every month with large numbers passing during the autumn/winter. 220 were at Tophill Low Res. on 25th February. Several waters in V.C. 63 had large flocks: 23 at Wath Ings on 5th May and 24 at Fly Flatts Res. on 18th May. Potteric Carr had 35 on 18th January, 65 on 27th February, 60 on 18th March and 40 in November. 65 were at Middletown Ings on 15th February and 50 flew west at Southfield Res. on 30th January. 101 flew west at Ewden/Langsett in four parties on 4th December. In V.C. 64, Gouthwaite Res. had 22 on 17th March as its spring maximum and 27 on 11th September as peak in autumn. 74 moved south-west in the gale at Staveley Lagoon on 11th September and 76 next day. 50 were at Nosterfield G.P. on 31st October with 32 on 2nd November. 50 on floodwater at Settle on 10th February was maximum count of peak numbers present during January to March. 300 were on the Lower Derwent floods on 25th January, numbers dropping to April with a passing flock of 100 at Wheldrake Ings on 8th May and up to 150 at the year-end. Up to 150 at Swillington Ings during February and up to 60 at Fairburn Ings during same period. Smaller numbers occurred at many other waters.

Many breeding records from the high ground of the west and south-west.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris testacea*

In contrast to 1975, numbers were low.

V.C. 61; Spurn had two on 31st August and one to four from 16th–18th September with singles on 25th and on 8th October. Tophill Low Res. had three on 29th August and one to two up to 6th September. Hornsea Mere had one on 20th August and one to two from 1st August to 20th September. One to three arrived at four sites along the Humber on a few dates from late August to late September.

V.C. 62; none.

V.C. 63; two at Winterset Res. on 1st September and 9th October with one on 25th September. Two at Mickletown Ings on 6th September and at Redmires Res. on 13th/14th August. Blacktoft Sands had one on 30th August and up to three in late September up to 1st October.

V.C. 64; singles at Masham G.P. on 29th August and Staveley Lagoon on 14th September with two at Fairburn Ings on 28th August.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

The large expanse of flat sand which fringes the long sweep of Bridlington Bay is the Sanderlings favourite haunt in Yorkshire. The stretch as far south as Fraisthorpe where pure sand gives way to shingle, held 114 on 6th January, 178 on 16th February, 337 on 23rd February, 450 on 7th March, and 266 on 26th March as maxima, numbers declining quickly thereafter (CS. *et al*). Nowhere else along the coast do such concentrations occur although the species is present along its length. Spurn had a maximum of 30 during the early months and 100 on 26th August as maxima at the year-end. 20 were at Filey on 21st January, 40 were on Scarborough South Beach on 5th February and 43 on 21st (RHA. FAW); these numbers are exceptional for the area. 26 were at Patrington Haven on 19th December (DIMW).

Inland occurrences were numerous with birds recorded from January to May and July to year-end. Numbers involved were usually singles but up to three (see below) and came from 20 waters in V.C.'s 63 and 64 mainly during May and August/September. Numbers over three were; five at Swillington Ings on 1st February, four at Fairburn Ings on 15th May and six at Staveley Lagoon on 29th September.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Occurred at many inland waters in most months, singles being normal, but up to eight on a few occasions and more on some dates; ten at Wath Ings on 19th August, up to ten at Fairburn Ings during August, 16 in September and 15 in October. 50 were at Wheldrake Ings on 28th September on which date 21 flew south, then north at Spurn. 108 were at Stone Creek on the Humber on 27th September (JED) and there was clearly an influx around this

time. 28 at Hornsea Mere on 18th September was maximum there. 50 were in fields near Easington on 2nd October and 30 were on stubble at Stone Creek on 7th November. Smaller numbers came from many other coastal and estuarine localities.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Two were at Tophill Low Res. on 18th and 19th May (KR. RC). One at Cherry Cobb Sands on 27th February (B. and SP) with two on 23rd May (KR). One flew south at Spurn on 12th June.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Fewer than in 1975. One at North Ferriby on 31st January (DIMW), one at Scarborough on 3rd January (RHA) and one at Spurn on 24th October.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

One at Worsborough Res. on 27th May (MEB. PBW. *et al*), one at Wintersett Res. on 17th June (PS) and one in breeding dress at Fairburn Ings on 28th June (SCM).

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*

One at Fairburn Ings on 28th June was watched at rest and in flight (SCM. CW). The fourth county record.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Two flying south off Scarborough on 6th March (RHA) were the only ones before 24th July when two were off Flamborough. Regular watching by PAL. and DIMW. at this latter locality was rewarded with some spectacular numbers (see the next three species) and birds were seen on many dates in August and September. The first big move was on 21st April when 18 were counted, smaller numbers passing almost daily to month-end. In September, 30 passed on 10th, 90 on 11th and 53 on 12th with 16 on 25th. The 10th/11/12th were days of gale force northerly winds and some spectacular passages of skuas and other marine species was noted inland. Watchers at Spurn also witnessed these movements and recorded 15 on 9th, 65 on 10th and 12 on 11th. Smaller numbers occurred at most other watchpoints but no more than seven seen on any one day except at Spurn where there were 11 on 28th September and 10 on 18th October. Three were off Flamborough on 20th November. A total of 286 Bonxies passed Flamborough between 24th July and 20th November (DIMW). One was at Blacktoft Sands on 8th September and three on 12th during the gale (AG) with 19 off Scarborough on 9th (MF).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

The only spring records were singles at Spurn on 19th and 24th April and at Blacktoft Sands on 24th April and 7th May. The first of autumn was one off Long Nab, Burniston on 29th June (MF) but it was mid-July before the real passage started. Maxima at Flamborough were 43 on 30th July, 60 on 21st August, 156 on 27th, 41 on 28th and 37 on 31st, 83 on 4th September, 47 on 5th, 424 on 10th (gales period), 157 on 11th, 64 on 12th and 57 on 25th, 76 on 1st October and 13 on 29th. No more thereafter until two birds of the year on 28th December (PAL. DIMW. *et al*). Other watchers recorded large numbers during the same periods from Filey, Hornsea and Spurn. Numbers at the latter were more spectacular than off Flamborough; 150 on 27th and again on 28th August, 320 on 2nd September, 140 on 4th, 562 on 9th and 260 on 10th (all flying south). 22 passed on 29th October and 41 on 30th.

The gales of 10th/11th/12th September brought birds inland and there were singles at

Winterset Res. and Staveley Lagoon on 11th (PS. RE. *et al*) and singles at Staveley Lagoon and Blacktoft Sands and three flying west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 12th (PTT. AG. MLD. *et al*). Obviously brought in during the same period were two at Fairburn Ings on 17th, five on 18th and one on 20th, one at Scawsby on 13th and one over Hatfield Moor on 26th. One was at Ingbirchworth Res. on 4th October (PBW) and one at Blacktoft Sands on 31st October (AG).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A flock of 12 light phase adults flew east over Spurn on 29th May, the only birds in spring.

The first of autumn was an adult flying south off Long Nab, Burniston and another off Hornsea on 23rd July (MF. SML). The next were three off Flamborough on 30th July. The Flamborough watchers recorded singles on four dates from 13th to 30th August and three on 28th, six on 5th September 16 on 10th and seven on 11th (gales period) with singles on 18th and 19th, three on 21st then 21 on 25th and one on 28th. In October, 18 on 1st, nine on 28th with one to four on four other dates and ten north and ten south on 29th (NAB), four on 11th November and seven on 20th (AG. PAL. DIMW. *et al*). Observers were also active at Hornsea and one to two were seen on six dates in August, two in September and two in October with 15 flying south on 15th (SLJ. WFC. *et al*). Five flew south at Filey on 26th September (A. and JD) and 45 flew south there mainly in parties of ten on 29th (SML). 19 flew south off Long Nab on 9th September with singles on 29th August and 7th September. Six flew north off Scarborough on 28th August (RHA). Ten flew north off Mappleton on 16th October (WFC). Spurn had singles on six dates in September/October/November with two on 9th September and the last on 18th November. Singles were also seen on Withernsea on 19th September and Sewerby on 25th September (SML. PB).



Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

The autumn of 1976 produced an unprecedented passage of this species. One at Hornsea on 26th August (WFC), an immature off Scarborough on 28th August (RHA) and one off Hornsea on 29th (RL. RGS). Four adults off Filey Brigg on 31st August (JW. Miss AF) and one at Bempton on 28th (SR). Singles off Hornsea on 12th and 25th September (SML) and Filey Brigg on 9th October (PD. VAL. JW).

The Flamborough sea-watchers had a total of 28 passing during August to October including 14 in the Bridlington/Flamborough area on 25th September (DIMW. PAL. *et al*). Spurn had singles on 7th August and 24th September with two on 27th and 28th August.

Inland; an adult flew east over Watch Ings on 29th May (JH) and one on 2nd September (JMT. DP. RH). An immature was at rest by a subsidence flash at Fairburn Ings on 19th December (JC. *et al*).

All accepted by *British Birds Rarities Committee*.

Addition to 1973 Report: A juvenile found dead at Filey on 19th September. Specimen now in the Doncaster museum. Originally thought to be *S. parasiticus*, the study skin was examined by C. A. Howes and correctly identified as *longicaudus*.

Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea*

A first-winter bird at Hornsea on 25th January was watched as it flew along the sea wall and later in a playing field with Common Gulls which it constantly harried (SLJ. DF. SM).

Accepted by *British Birds Rarities Committee*.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Inland waters attracted the now expected high numbers with 750 at Fairburn Ings in November, 650 at Winterset Res. in January and 500 in December, 575 at Blackmoorfoot Res. in January but only 145 as a lower than usual maximum in December. 300 were at Hay-a-Park G.P. in December. Five other waters (two in V.C. 64 and three in V.C. 65) had 100 to 200 during the same periods, and a few other waters had up to 100.

Hornsea Mere had maxima of 200 in February, 400 in September, 600 in October, 90 in November and 200 in December. Spurn's maxima occurred in January and from August to year-end with 250 in January, 400 in August, 350 in September, 500 in October, 300 in November and 200 in December.

An aberrant bird, probably the one seen in 1974 and 1975, was at Scalby Mills in July (MF. RHA).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Some winter flocks at favoured roosting sites with maxima of 500 at Eccup Res. in January and 500 at Winterset Res. in November.

The usual large numbers passed through the western half of the county during the spring and autumn. Passage through the eastern half was traditionally light.

There were several records of the Scandinavian race *L. f. fuscus*; singles at Flamborough in May and up to three daily during August and early September, Hornsea Mere on 19th June, and 15th October, two at Bempton on 1st September, Catfoss G.P. on 6th November and at Spurn where they were recorded from April to November on two to three dates per month and usually singly except during July (six on 26th), six dates in September and seven dates in October (eight on 16th). Five were at Eccup Res. with 800 of the nominate form on 21st September (PD).

A pair bred successfully for the second year at Nosterfield G.P. and reared one chick (CS). See report for 1974.

There was a colony of 300 birds at Bog Moss in Arkengarthdale, many with eggs on 16th May (GEA).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Maxima inland were 1000 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 22nd January, 1300 at Broomhead Res. on 21st December, 1500 at Winterset Res. on 23rd December and 1500 at Hay-a-Park G.P. during December. Smaller numbers occurred at many other places.

Birds showing characters of the Scandinavian form *L. a. omissus* were at Flamborough Head on 6th November (PAL) and Catfoss G.P. on 6th December (SMC). There would be more.

Two at errant birds were seen at Scalby Mills. A cream coloured individual with brown primaries in January and an almost white one with a brownish wash on mantle and wings with brown edges to outer two primaries (RHA).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Two pairs nested by a moorland tarn in Upper Wharfedale; a nest with one egg on 7th June, one dead young and two empty nests on 19th June with anxious adults overhead (EAC. MVB).

Passage inland and along the coast involved the usual high numbers (see previous reports).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Although the Reports Committee requires descriptions of this species, mainly to judge against aberrant gulls, records are becoming too numerous to list in detail and are summarised for the coastal vice-counties. V.C. 61; singles at Hornsea Mere on 12 dates during January to April and on 21st November (DEM. SLJ. RGH. *et al*). Singles at Filey Brigg on 24th January, 14th February and 20th November (RHA. GED. *et al*), Flamborough Head on 17th and 24th September, 2nd October and 20th November (PAL. IS. *et al*), Bridlington on 1st February (SLJ. *et al*) and Hornsea on 29th and 31st January (WFC). V.C. 62; seen in the Jackson's Bay/Scalby Mills/Scarborough Harbour/Cornelian Bay area on several dates during January, March and April and on 1st and 3rd November and 5th December (RHA. MF. FAW. *et al*). Sightings of first-winter birds predominated; there were some second-winter and only two adults. One was at Whitby on 18th January (PAL) and one at Long Nab, Burniston on 11th April (MF).

Inland records were also numerous: V.C. 63; singles at Winterset Res. on 25th January (1st W.), 25th to 31st January (2nd W.), 23rd October (Ad.) and 30th December (2nd W.) (PS. RP. GJS. *et al*). Blackmoorfoot Res. on 16th and 19th February (Ad.) (JED. MLD) and 6th and 7th March (2nd W.) (PB). Wath Grammar School field on 13th March (NA) and Langsett Res. on 12th December (RW). V.C. 64; an adult at Eccup Res. on 22nd February (SPS). Single immatures on 18th and 19th March, 8th April and 19th October. One at Knostrop on 10th and 11th April and at Swillington Ings on 10th April. Some of these records may refer to the same individual. An adult on Lower Barden Res. from 4th to 7th April (FAW), a second-winter at Chelker Res. on 11th December and a first-winter on 24th December (PMW. FAW). One at Knotford Nook G.P. on 31st December (FAW). V.C. 65; one at Catterick rubbish tip on 13th February (GDM).

Addition to 1975 Report: An adult on Bentley Common on 30th November (DDOS).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

The trend of increased numbers continued in 1976.

V.C. 61; one at Atwick Gap on 26th January and another bird (oiled) on 27th (WFC). Singles at Filey Brigg on 24th January and 27th and 28th February (RHA). Singles at Hornsea Mere on 10th January, 17th February and 2nd October (RGH. SLJ) and two on the sea-front on 13th February one of which was oiled (WFC). V.C. 62; a second-winter bird frequented the Scarborough area during January and February and on 24th April, with a first-winter bird on 17th January (RHA. NAB. DJB. MF), and a second-winter bird on 29th October (MF). V.C. 63; one at Kirkheaton tip on 8th January (2nd W.) (DS). An adult, a first-winter and a second-winter at Blackmoorfoot Res. each seen on two dates between 14th

January and 22nd March and an adult on 12th December (PB. MLD. GMY. *et al*). One at Broomhead Res. on 8th and 10th February and an adult on 4th and 30th December (A & BH. JK. *et al*). A second-winter at Winterset Res. on 31st January and a first-winter on 21st February (PS. GJS). An immature at Blacktoft Sands on 7th April (AG). V.C. 64; a first-winter at Fairburn Ings on 10th April and a second-winter on 21st November (SCM. *et al*). One at Eccup Res. from 28th to 31st December (SPS).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

V.C. 61; a second-summer at Bempton on 19th April (NAB). An adult at Flamborough Head on 13th August (PAL. IS. AG), 19th September (DIMW) and an immature on 24th September (PAL. IS). Two adults in Bridlington Bay on 1st October and an immature on 9th October (PAL. IS). V.C. 62; an adult at Scalby Mills on 24th January (RHA. MF) whereafter birds were present from 14th February to 2nd May with six individuals (two ads., two sub-ads. and two 1st-year) on 28th March. At least nine different birds involved during the period (RHA. DJB. SCM. FAW. *et al*). V.C. 63; a first-winter bird at Elland G.P. on 31st January (JED). An immature at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 2nd September (PB. MLD). V.C. 64; first-winter bird on Waterloo Lake, Roundhay Park, Leeds on 5th January (IHD). A first-summer at Fairburn Ings on 31st May (SCM). One in breeding dress over Tadcaster on 14th July (SMC).

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Birds were seen in all months except December.

V.C. 61: Singles were at Hornsea on 28th January and at Filey on 31st with six flying north at Bridlington on latter date and four on 1st February. One to two were recorded along the coast from mid-April through to July when the autumn build-up started. Hornsea Mere had up to 18 regularly during August with 23 on 22nd (DJB), and up to 44 during first half of September with 55 on 20th decreasing to five by month-end. 85 flew east then north at Flamborough on 25th September, 21 on 1st October, 73 on 28th October, 11 on 20th November and seven on 24th November as maxima (PAL. DIMW). Spurn had 40 on 27th and 28th October, 55 on 29th and 19 on 30th, 12 on 14th November and 46 on 27th November. Smaller numbers occurred at several other coastal localities during these periods. Singles at Tophill Low Res. on several dates in May and one on 7th July.

V.C. 62: Smaller numbers were present with the well-watched Scarborough area producing most records; Scalby Mills had one to three birds on a few dates during February to early April and up to four during the autumn with an adult in full plumage, including a



SCM

pink flush on the underparts on 18th July (RHA). Five were at Long Nab, Burniston on 7th November (MF) and one in Scarborough Harbour on 28th November (RHA). An oiled bird was in Whitby Harbour on 31st January.

V.C. 63: Recorded, mainly singly from eight waters mainly during May and August/September with four at Blacktoft Sands on 30th August and four at Fly Flatts Res. from 17th to 24th August as maxima.

V.C. 64: Fairburn Ings had a good spring passage with 44 different birds between 25th April and 10th May. Most were adults in breeding dress and included parties of 22 on 26th April and 16 on 3rd May. Fewer occurred in autumn with singles on 13th August, 19th/20th September and 25th October with two from 12th to 18th September. One stayed at Castle Howard Lake from 31st July to 19th August. One to two occurred at 11 other waters in April/May and September/October.

V.C. 65: One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. from 8th to 18th May (GDM).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

The usual large waters had roosts during the autumn and winter months with maxima of 7,140 into Hay-a-Park G.P., Knaresborough on 11th December (RE), 10,000 at Fairburn Ings in January and 7,000 in November, 8,000 at Winterset Res. on 21st February and 12,000 on 18th December and 8,000 at Southfield Res. on 16th August. 20,000 flew in to roost on the Upper Humber during September. A large arrival was noted at Flamborough on 24th September and Spurn had a large increase from end of July to early September.

One found injured at Cracoe, near Skipton on 27th March 1976 had been ringed as a chick in Finland in June 1968.

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*

One was at Scalby Mills, Scarborough from 27th March to 28th April and was watched by very many people. See full account elsewhere in this report.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

One flying south off-shore at Spurn on 15th October was not accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

One immature at Filey Brigg on 6th March (SH. RW), one immature at Flamborough on 3rd April (PAL. IS), an adult south at Flamborough on 28th August (PAL. IS), and single immatures at Filey on 9th and 11th September (VAL. *et al*). Flamborough on 10th, 11th and 25th September (PAL. DIMW. AG). In October, Flamborough had singles on 15th, 18th, 28th, 29th and 30th (2 immatures and 3 adults) (PAL. DIMW. *et al*). An adult at Withernsea on 17th November (SML) and singles off Flamborough on 9th and 11th December (DIMW).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

The usual off-shore movements occurred and involved some large numbers; on 21st March, 4,800 flew south off Long Nab, Burniston between 0835 and 1135 hours and 6,000 flew south off Filey between 1100 and 1200 hours (MF. NAB). 1,734 had passed south at Filey in one hour at mid-day on the 20th. August movements were many and complex with birds passing north at Hornsea on the 20th and 28th and passing south off Filey on the 21st, 23rd and 24th. On the latter date, many hundreds were passing in the early morning. 1,090 flew north off Flamborough in 1½ hours on 26th December.

Inland records were too numerous to detail with birds occurring on many dates at nine waters in V.C. 63 mainly during February/March and August to October. Single birds were usual but up to three at three places and seven at Wath Ings on 14th October moving south-east in a strong northerly wind. 42 were up the Humber at Blacktoft Sands on 9th April, 36

on 27th May and 70 on 28th all during strong northerly winds. Recorded singly at six places in V.C. 64, with seven records from January to April at Fairburn (six records) and Gouthwaite Res. (4th April). One at Staveley Lagoon on 26th August and singles at three waters on 11th and 12th September, a period of strong gales.

Correction to 1975 Report: Penultimate line: delete 'found'.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Spring passage through the county was quite good with birds at Tophill Low, Hornsea, Easington, Cherry Cobb and Spurn on 23rd and 24th May, eight at Tophill Low on 23rd being the maximum. Blacktoft Sands had up to six during 5th to 25th May. Winterset Res. had up to five birds from 6th to 30th May and singles on 4th and 8th June and Wath Ings had up to four during this period. One to three birds also occurred at five other waters in V.C. 63 and at six waters in V.C. 64 with Fairburn Ings attracting 12 on 24th May. Two were at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. in V.C. 65 on 8th May.

Two at Fairburn Ings on 5th July were the only birds recorded in that month. Passage in autumn was widespread with small numbers at 19 inland waters, mainly during late August but from early July to end of September and a few into October. Maximum was 11 at Fairburn Ings on 21st September, otherwise only up to five occurred at any one place. Late birds were at Fairburn Ings on 12th October and at Wheldrake Ings on 16th and 17th October. Some passed along the coast with four flying south at Filey on 30th August and four east of Flamborough on 21st September and 13 on 25th. Four south off Long Nab, Burniston on 9th September and singles at Scarborough on 2nd and 21st October.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

An immature flew north at Flamborough Head on 25th September (PAL. IS).

A juvenile was at Fairburn Ings from 17th to 21st September (PH. CW. *et al*).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

An adult at Tophill Low Res. on 26th and 27th May (IC. BGP. PWI).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*

One at Spurn on 11th July (JC. CM. BSP. *et al*). An immature at Flamborough Head on 25th September (DIMW).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne tschegrava*

One at Waterloo Lake, Roundhay Park, Leeds on 3rd July was later seen at Eccup Res. (IHD. SPS. ECS).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Most birds were recorded as '*Commics*' but of those which were specified, the first were six at Hornsea Mere on 20th April after a few unspecified birds, the first being three at Spurn on 11th April.

Inland occurrences were numerous and many waters had small numbers during late April and May with birds in all months up to mid-October. Maxima were 41 at Winterset Res. on 25th May and other birds recorded as '*Commics*' were 26 at Southfield Res. on the 24th, 34 at Potteric Carr on 17th August and 21 at Wath Ings on 12th September (gale). Fairburn

Ings had a good spring passage of Commons with 68 on 5th May, 60 on 15th and 49 on 24th. A total of 320 birds passed through the reserve during the spring. Numbers passing through the county in autumn were much smaller.

Some coastal movements involved large numbers with 1,132 passing south off Filey in one hour at mid-day on 21st August and 605 in four hours on the 23rd. 850 flew north off Hornsea on 28th August and 1,940 flew south off Spurn in the evening of 9th September. These are probably feeding movements or a result of roosting flocks being shifted with the tides.

The last birds were two at Spurn on 25th October.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Very few were specifically identified and many of the birds recorded under the last species as 'Comms' would be of this species: the Spurn Bird Observatory Report for instance lumps the Common and Arctic Tern together with no attempt to indicate the incidence of either species.

Inland, records were numerous with this species moving through Fairburn Ings in advance of the Common Terns; recorded from 19th April to 29th May with 180 birds during the period. Maxima were 40 on 21st April, 45 on 25th and 20 on 15th May. Several other waters had small numbers during the same period. Autumn records were fewer with the majority during September and mainly during the heavy gale on the 12th.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

One at Hornsea Mere on 6th May (AG), one off Scarborough on 12th May, three flying south off Kettleness and one at Burniston on 28th May (PAL. MF), one north off Burniston on 8th June and two north off Hornsea on 12th June (MF. JEA). One at Whitton Sand on 27th June (DIMW). Two feeding off Long Nab, Burniston on 11th and 12th August (MF).

Inland records came from Fairburn Ings where there was one on 5th May and one calling from four passing terns on 15th September (SCM).

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Occurred at Spurn from 1st May to mid-August with maxima occurring in July when from 17 to 37 were counted on ten dates, otherwise small numbers. A few others were seen along the coast, mainly during August and usually singly, up to three occasionally, and five flying south at Burniston on 5th August as maximum.

One was at Blacktoft Sands on 24th May and singles occurred at Almholme Marsh on 13th May, Potteric Carr on 11th and 14th September, Harthill Res. on 6th May, Winterset Res. on 23rd May and 5th June with two on 27th June. Blackmoorfoot Res. had one on 9th May and nine on 20th September with one on 30th. One at Staveley Lagoon on 28th May and two in the heavy gale on 11th September. One at Swinsty Res. on 28th June and singles at Fairburn Ings on 22nd May and 2nd July. Two at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. from 11th to 18th May.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The first was at Spurn on 24th March (FAW) and the next at Scalby Mills on 2nd April (RHA).

Large numbers were involved in movements all along the coast during the autumn with maxima of 487 flying north and 55 south of Filey Brigg in three hours on 21st August, 600 flying south off Flamborough on 4th August, 700 on 20th and 500 on 21st. 550 passed there on 10th September and 350 on 11th. 800 were in the Spurn area on 31st July and 1,000 to 1,500 during mid-August. 3,000 were at Spurn in the evening of 11th August and 2,835 on 9th September.

Inland occurrences were three at Wath Ings on 2nd May, one at Broomhill Flash on 7th, two at Denaby Ings on 9th and one at Winterset Res. on 19th, singles at Knotford Nook G.P., and Staveley Lagoon on the 12th and one at Castle Howard Lake on the 12th. Two were at Swillington on the 19th. Fairburn had three on 26th April, two on 6th May and 7th August with one on 5th September.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

A leucistic bird at Bempton had the black parts pale creamy-fawn and another was off Long Nab, Burniston on 7th August which was creamy-white with a pale brown head and tinge to mantle (SCM. MF).

25 pairs were settled in on Newbiggin Cliff, Filey Brigg on 13th July (HOB). The Bempton Cliffs population was not censused.

1,750 flew south in three hours off Filey on 15th April (SCM).

One was being eaten by a Grey Seal off Scalby Mills on 11th November (MF).

Little Auk *Alle alle*

A few birds were recorded in the early months with five at Flamborough Head on 5th January and one on 25th (DIMW) with one at Burniston on 1st February (MF) and three dead in Jackson's Bay, Scarborough on 2nd February (J. Webb).

Two were in Bridlington Bay on 1st October, two at Spurn on 30th October with three on 31st. One found dead (oiled) at Easington on 11th December and two at East Newton on 29th December.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

5,500 flew south off Filey in three hours on 15th April (see Razorbill) (SMC).

ca. 25 pairs on Newbiggin Cliff, Filey on 22nd May (HOB).

One on the River Ouse near Swinefleet on 31st August (SH. TE).

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*

More records than usual: one at Filey Brigg on 6th March. One at Hornsea on 10th September and at Flamborough Head on 17th, 28th and 30th October with two on 21st November. Singles at Filey Brigg on 10th and 23rd October, with two on 24th and 28th October and one to two on several dates to 20th November.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

ca. 25 pairs on Newbiggin Cliff, Filey on 22nd May and 13th July (HOB).

Flamborough Head had some remarkable numbers; 21,250 flew north in 7½ hours on 30th July, 14,575 during the same period on the 31st and 2,472 on 13th August (PAL).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

The Bempton breeding birds contained ca. 60% pure 'blue' birds (ca. 80% in 1975) (SR).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Larger gatherings were 63 at Healaugh on 1st January, a roost of 170 in Shire Oaks Wood, Tadcaster on 15th January, 40 at Fairburn Ings on 24th March, 130 at Pockley on 7th February, 200 at Staveley Lagoon on 11th September and 100 at Knaresborough Ringing

Station on 30th October. Hatfield Moor had 100 on 10th October, 200 on 16th, 120 on 27th and 90 on 31st December.

Flocks of up to 30 birds occurred at Midhope, Blacktoft Sands, Wath Ings, Washburn Valley, Upper Nidderdale and 24 on a pea field at Burton Salmon on 24th April.



Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Numbers at Hornsea Mere did not match those of 1975 and a maximum of 2,130 was counted in February.

Numbers elsewhere were average with no really spectacular numbers but 3,000 flew over Otley on 16th March, 2,000 were at Staveley and 1,600 flew over Fairburn Ings on 30th October, 1,500 at Potteric Carr on 25th December and 1,000 at Liley Wood, near Huddersfield on 31st December. *ca.* 1,200 roosted in Shire Oaks Wood, Tadcaster in January and October. 1,000 roosted in the Ewden Valley during November and December and 250 flew north at Flamborough Head on 4th April.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

The earliest arrival was one at Sandall Beat on 22nd April with the next at Winterset Res. on the 28th and Bempton on the 30th. Birds were more widespread from 1st to 3rd May. Passage was evident at Blacktoft Sands with 379 flying west between 2nd May and 24th June, 35 on 16th May being the maximum. Movement through Fairburn Ings during May peaked at 20 on the 24th. Spurn had birds passing south in May and June with 31 on 31st May and 75 on 5th June as maxima. On 13th July, 62 were on wires over a pea field near Fairburn village (SML). Most areas were clear of birds by the end of the third week of September, later records being at Fairburn Ings on 3rd October with eight at South Elmsall on same date and one at Winterset Res. on 20th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

My comments for 1975 regarding spread and populations apply again this year. Birds are now more regular in Upper Wharfedale and are increasing in the Settle area. The moorland fringes and upland villages in V.C. 63 are now colonised after an absence up to 1974. The usual concentrations occurred in the eastern half of the county with flocks of 100 at Copgrove, near Knaresborough on 17th January, Wentworth on 3rd October and 110 at Sprotborough Flash on 31st December. 200 at an orchard roost at Thorne during January. Other large numbers doubtless occurred but reporting is not as complete now that the novelty has worn off.

Singles of the pale buff variety occurred during the year at Fairburn.

Spurn had unusually large numbers in October with "ten to 68 flying south on ten days". This interpretation, taken from the Spurn Report is difficult to understand and gives no real picture of the happening.

A pair were nest building at Redmires on 9th February when snow lay on the ground (KC).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

The first and very early were two in Denby Dale on 8th April with the next in Frickley Park on 16th. The main influx was during 19th to 21st April with birds at four places on the 19th and several others during the next two days.

Last recorded inland at Tinsley S.F. on 16th September after a few other records during the first week on the month including Spurn where up to four occurred to 4th then singles on 6th, 8th, 10th and 18th.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Widespread reports and indications of a healthy breeding population. V.C. 61 had sightings from at least 20 localities in all months, chiefly October/November and mainly in Holderness, a county stronghold.

Birds of the dark breasted form occurred: one at Flamborough on 21st November was considered to be typical *T. a. guttata* (PAL). One at Skeffling on 7th November was also dark and thought to be of this race (GED). One at Flamborough on 23rd October was an exhausted migrant and buff breasted but not typical (DIMW). Strength of colour varies considerably and more than can be positively diagnosed come over from the other side.

Singles at Spurn on 8th/9th and 29th October and one near the lighthouse on 7th November were normal *alba*.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Breeding was confirmed for 18 pairs in the Huddersfield area. Present at over 50 sites in the Settle area (none was recorded here in the B.T.O. census of 1938). Reports of singles came from all over the county in all months.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

The large influx of October 1975 was much in evidence on the way out again in spring. Spurn had 12 birds between 26th March and 31st May and the Flamborough area had several singles during April and early May. Tophill Low Res. had singles in February and April. One was on Filey Brigg on 27th March. Five were in Dane's Dyke on 14th February and four on 21st March. Two other coastal places had single birds in the same period. Two roosts in the south east which no doubt contained immigrant birds held six and five birds from February to early May.

In the autumn, numbers were fewer than last year. Spurn had only three birds and Flamborough had singles on eight dates from mid-August to end of October with singles at Holmpton on 31st October and one in off the sea on 7th November, Hull on 29th December

and Hornsea Mere on two dates in September and three in November with up to four roosting in December.

V.C. 63 had good numbers discovered through increased observer activity thus confirming my belief that the species is more numerous than supposed: at least 18 pairs bred and there were some good winter roosts with 13 in Haw Park on 18th January, ten on 22nd February and nine on 28th November. Nine were at Melton Wood on 23rd March and up to eight in the Sheffield area during January/February. Three were near Bretton Park in January.

In V.C. 64, one at Fairburn Ings on 10th April was likely to be an emigrant. Occurred near Staveley, the Washburn Valley, near York (two sites) and at Stocks Res. where at least two pairs were present.

Bred near Scarborough and recorded at two other forestry sites in the area.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Breeding records varied with only three confirmed on moorland sites in V.C. 63 but observers in V.C. 64 reported success at several sites with up to 20 birds in Langthorpe Dale in the summer. Two pairs nested at Blacktoft Sands.

Records outside the breeding season were too numerous to detail and came from all habitats. Coastal records in the late spring and autumn no doubt involved migrant birds.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

V.C. 61: Bred at Skipwith Common with up to three males during May and June (A & JD. JHL. GS). One caught at Spurn on 28th October.

V.C. 62: Two birds seen and heard on Silpho Moor in June (RHA).

V.C. 63: Hatfield Moor had six singing birds on 20th May and eight on 5th June (DDOS). One on Thorne Moors on 14th May and 16 pairs estimated on 19th June (AS). Three other sites in the south-west had birds in June.

V.C. 64: Sawley High Moor had only one male from 27th May to end of June (JS. MRS. *et al*). One spent some days on a garage roof at Kippax, near Leeds in August and finally died.

Swift *Apus apus*

One at Naburn on 29th April was the only bird in that month. One at Fairburn Ings on 1st May and a widespread arrival on the 2nd with birds at seven places ranging from Hooton Pagnell, Tophill Low and Harrogate.

There were records from 18 localities in October, the latest being at Denaby Ings on the 24th. Four flew south at Filey Brigg on the 16th when one was at Hornsea and singles passed almost daily at Spurn from 3rd to 20th. One was near Scarborough on 2nd November (MF) and one at Naburn on 5th November (TDC).

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

One at Burniston, near Scarborough on 14th June (J. Webb). One frequented Scarborough Castle Hill on 18th and 19th September (MF. FAW. ASW. *et al*).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

The bird at Hornsea Mere on 26th August 1975 (*qv*) was also accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Kingfisher *Atthis alcedo*

Spurn had singles on 8th May and on 6th, 14th, 18th and 19th September and on 22nd October and 6th November.

Elsewhere, the species was widely reported. Fairburn Ings had most records during the period mid-July to mid-October when juveniles are on the move and dispersing.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One at Spurn from 20th to 22nd April. One at Keyingham on 2nd May (DW). One on a lawn at Hutton Conyers, near Ripon on 29th May — a day of persistent rain (per CS). One at Greetland, near Halifax on two dates in late August/early September (Mrs. JB). One at Scarborough Castle Hill on 26th September (MB. *et al*) and one on Thorne Moors on 30th September (AC).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Occurred normally with the majority of records coming from the usual areas of V.C.'s 62, 63 and 64. 20 pairs were proved to breed and there were many other records of birds present during the summer.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Spurn had one on 17th October and one came in over the sea on 30th October. Occurrences elsewhere were widespread and normal.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Reported from 19 localities in V.C. 64 and seven in V.C. 63. Only two records in V.C. 62 including a pair on 2nd May in Duncombe Park. Confirmed breeding records were few and a pair which reared four young near Worsborough was the first proof for this area.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

There was only one spring record: a bird at Scalby Mills Beck from 22nd to 25th April (J. Webb. DJB. *et al*). One was at Potteric Carr from 5th to 13th July and called and sang regularly (per RJR).

An exceptional autumn with more records than ever before: The first were two at Spurn on 18th August after which one to six were present up to the 26th then up to three daily from 29th August to 5th September with four on 13th and up to five in mid-September with one to two on several dates up to 10th October. Further north at Filey there were singles on 24th August and from 28th to 31st and one on 12th and from 17th to 19th September. At Flam-



borough there were singles on 26th and 27th August, four on 29th, two on 30th and one on 31st with singles on 2nd and 24th September. One at Bempton on 26th August. One in Dane's Dyke on 25th September and one at Kilnsea Lagoons on 31st October.

Inland records were unprecedented: One at Potteric Carr on 22nd August, one at Fairburn Ings on 27th and singles caught at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 28th and 30th. One was near Harrogate on 29th and one found dead at Rothwell on 31st. One at Winterset Res. on 30th August and one dead at Carcroft, near Doncaster on 1st September with one at Lower Barden Res. on 4th September. A few occurred in late September with singles at Fairburn Ings on the 13th, near Harrogate on 26th, Langsett Res. on 29th and an ailing bird at Doncaster on 9th October which died.

Correction to 1976 Report: Para 2, line 1 should read: An exceptional autumn (not return).

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

One in the cliff-top fields at Jackson's Bay, Scarborough with Skylarks and Linnets on 29th January and two on 30th (MF. *et al*). One at Fairburn Ings on 1st June (CW *et al*).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

The usual southerly movements occurred at Spurn during September and October and involved similar numbers to last year. 800 flew south at Hornsea Mere on 27th September and 840 at Spurn next day. 200 came in over the sea at Spurn on 11th October and a similar immigration was noted at Burniston next day when 98 flew west in $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours then 200 in 15 minutes, small parties being in evidence all day.

3,420 flew south-west over Knaresborough Ringing Station up to mid-day on 25th January during snow showers. There were many other weather movements and flocks during the non-breeding season, the largest being 800 at Hesley Hall, near Doncaster on 14th December and 1,150 flying south at Tadcaster after a light snowfall on 28th December.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

Very few in the early part of the year: one at Spurn on 1st February, two at Fraisthorpe on 16th January, two at Hornsea on 21st February and four at Filey on 14th February.

In autumn there were many more, with birds recorded from 2nd October to year-end. Four at Tunstall and one at Spurn on 2nd October were the first with up to eight during October, four in November and 24 on 5th December and 21 on 21st December as maxima. Small numbers, mainly under ten, occurred at 12 other coastal localities from Easington to Scarborough with 17 at Burniston on 1st November and 16 at Easington Lagoons on 12th December.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

One at Knotford Nook G.P. during a sleet shower on 21st March was well ahead of the next birds at Fairburn Ings, Doncaster and Keswick on 4th April. Three more places had birds on the 5th and a few others during the next five days.

There were several records in early November, the latest being singles at Nostell Priory, Hornsea, Brandesburton and Fairburn Ings on 7th, Wath Ings and Knaresborough Ringing Station on 11th and Bridlington on 13th. A frustrating statement in the Spurn Bird Observatory Report that 18 birds occurred on eight dates in November gives no picture of the events whatsoever.

A leucistic juvenile was at Newby, near Scarborough on 4th July (MF).

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

One at Seamer Road Mere, Scarborough on 10th May (MF).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The first at Wath Ings on 8th April was six days ahead of the vanguard leading the main influx during the 20th/21st.

Late birds were singles at Nostell Priory and Settle on 7th November, two at Bridlington on 11th and one at Bretton Park on 14th.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The first were at Broomhead Moor, Wath Ings and Fairburn Ings on 28th March with one at Scalby Mills on the 29th.

The largest autumn roosts were 10,00 at Swillington Ings on 21st August and 10,000 at Fairburn Ings during late August. Birds were in evidence until early October, the last being at Wath Ings, Winterset Res. and Nostell Priory on 15th, 16th and 17th respectively.

A leucistic bird was at Fairburn Ings from 26th to 28th September.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

A female at Spurn on 28th May and a male in Kilnsea on 30th (GED) and on 2nd and 4th June.

One sang at Bolton Abbey on 8th June (PMW. DC).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Five pairs attempted to breed in the north-west. Three birds at Austwick Moors on 29th May and one on Attamires Scar, near Settle on 11th December.

One was at Dane's Dyke, Flamborough with other *corvids* on 4th September (PAL. IS). This is an exceptional record and suspected birds away from the high ground should be viewed with caution.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The Hornsea Mere roost held maxima of 180 on 3rd May and 180 on 31st October, numbers being much lower than in 1975. In November, however, 4,000 *corvids* contained *ca.* one third of this species. 130 flew north at Flamborough Head on 8th May. A roost at Ogden Res. woods, near Halifax held *ca.* 200 on 3rd April and 250 on 19th November. 60 were on the ice at Southfield Res. on 2nd February. 122 were at Eastmoor, near York on 30th October. Numerous in the suburbs of many large towns where unmolested.

The Hooded Crow *C. c. cornix*, occurred in very large numbers: Spurn had 39 on 31st October, 32 on 8th November, 42 on 13th and 24 on 14th, mostly flying south. The largest parties elsewhere were 11 at Flamborough on 8th May and 39 on 31st October (see Spurn above) with 12 at Ottringham on same date. Many other coastal localities had single figures during January to May and October to year-end.

There were records, mainly of singles, from 12 localities in V.C. 63, and nine in V.C. 64 mostly during January/February and October/November. One at Leighton Res. on 30th October and Fairburn Ings on 31st with three at Staveley Lagoon on latter date were no doubt connected with the coastal influx. One at Nosterfield G.P. on 14th August was very early (CS).

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

The highest number in the county was at a roost at Mapple Yard, Doncaster which contained 17,000 birds in November.

The Hornsea Mere roost contained *ca.* 2,000 during February and November. 2,000 flew to roost near Cookridge, Leeds on 7th February and on 20th November.

A leucistic bird was at Wheldrake on 21st November (DB. FWO).

Magpie *Pica pica*

Nowhere is the Magpie so numerous as in the Rivelin Valley and around Ogden Res. 120 attended a roost at Rivelin on 29th January and 100 at Ogden on 18th December. Other roosts in V.C. 63 of 85 at Meltham on 29th January, 60 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 9th February and 80 in the Ewden Valley in early December.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

21 fed on Bilberry at Langsett Banks on 7th August.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Reports from the Barnsley area that breeding success was low for the second successive year and nestboxes at Whitgift, near Goole showed a poor success rate. In contrast, the Leeds Birdwatchers Club Report says "nestbox successes were plentiful".

Some evidence of immigration at Spurn in the autumn and on Scarborough Castle Hill where there were 50 on 19th September and 'many' involved in October falls of migrants along the Scarborough area coastline.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris*

Reported from only two possible breeding sites in V.C. 63 with only five other records of singles in that vice-county. Very thinly distributed in the county.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

A flock of 63 in alders at Ramsgill in Upper Nidderdale on 7th February was by far the largest number (SML).

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

One at Filey on 10th April and one in Primrose Valley on 15th. (IC. AMA). One at Great Ayton on 15th February (TAB). Two in Bransdale on 1st March and one at Thornton-le-Dale on 27th March. Occurrences in the western half of the county were normal.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

V.C. 61: One at Spurn on 24th October and two on 30th. Hornsea Mere had more records than for some time with calling heard on two January dates, singles on 6th February, 18th April, 7th May and heard on 27th September. Recorded on six October dates with maximum of ten on 16th and on seven November dates with maximum of six on 11th and calling heard on two December dates. Five at Welton Waters on 17th January, four on 23rd March, ten on 14th November and eight on 21st (DIMW. RL. AMA). 20 were on Broomfleet Island during October. One at Tophill Low Res. on 30th September and six present from 8th November to year-end.

V.C. 63: Blacktoft Sands; wintering population of *ca.* 350 during January and February. Cold weather during March reduced the numbers to *ca.* 200. At least 80 pairs nested. First broods were not too successful due to cold weather, second broods were good during a fine, warm period with very few third broods. Early autumn population was *ca.* 800 with irruptive behaviour in October and early November, half the birds leaving the reserve, but influxes from elsewhere built up the numbers to 500 in November and 400 in December.

V.C. 64: Two birds at Fairburn Ings on 8th April.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

More large flocks reported than normally: 50 were at Strines on 1st August and 50 at Redmires on 19th September. 35 roosted in conifers at Gouthwaite Res. on 10th August and 29 were present on 3rd October. Up to 36 at Castle Howard during September. 20 flew south-west over York on 24th September. 20 were at Haw Gill, near Skipton on 19th September, 33 at Kettlesbeck, near Settle on 21st August and 37 at Cockett Moss on 14th September. 27 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 25th August and 30 at Colsterdale on 27th August. 40 at John O'Gaunt's Res. on 10th September (DB).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The usual exodus during April with maxima of 800 on Sawley High Moor on 3rd, 650 at Middleham on 5th, and two flocks of 600 and 300 in Coverdale, 240 in Bransdale on 10th, 300 at Stocksbridge on 15th, 500 over Pannal at dusk on 16th, 2,000 at Addingham on 17th, 320 near Leeds on 22nd, 450 at Redmires on 23rd and 700 near Beckwithshaw on 26th. 110 were at Holmbridge on 3rd May. Birds lingered up to mid-May at several places and a few to the month-end with three at Bishopthorpe, York on 29th, Fairburn Ings and Bempton on 31st.

Three with Starlings in central Sheffield on 6th August were exceptionally early and there were 12 present on the 18th. One at Farnham on 7th September and one near Harrogate on 9th. 18 in Coverdale on 8th and small numbers seen at a few other places from the 16th but the main influx was in mid-October. Spurn had birds almost daily from 22nd August.

3,086 flew west over Staveley Lagoon on 31st October with 500 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on same day. 1,000 were in Bransdale on 31st October. Numbers at the year-end were not large and roosts provided the highest counts: 1,800 in Gisburn Forest on 10th November and 2,000 in the Ewden Valley during mid-December. The largest wandering flocks were 1,000 near Scarborough on 11th November, 1,500 at Gouthwaite Res. on 28th, 1,000 at Arthington on 24th December and 1,000 at Bentley Tilts during late November and early December.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

An obvious passage at Bempton and Scarborough in late September with many observed coming in over the sea. An increase at Flamborough Head from 27th September with *ca.* 500 on 25th October (AG). Spurn had similar influxes from 23rd September with 200 on 1st and 2nd October, 500 on 27th and 280 on 28th.

150 were counted at Gouthwaite Res. on 3rd October, a day of heavy *thrush* movement. 300 at Fairburn Ings on 2nd November with other *thrushes*.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

A few birds lingered well into May with singles at Spurn on 8th and 29th, Flamborough on 22nd, Emley Moor on 4th, near Settle on 3rd and Fairburn Ings on 1st and 7th.

First of autumn was at Spurn on 12th September with singles on 13th, 15th and 20th then daily from 23rd. One flew over Knaresborough Ringing Station on 18th September and one was at Fairburn Ings on same date. It was well into October before the main influx took place with 1,000 at Filey on 27th, 700 at Hornsea Mere on 28th when 2,000 were at Flamborough Head. At Spurn there were 4,500 on 23rd (coming over the sea and continuing west), 5,000 on 27th and 2,000 grounded on 28th. A smaller arrival occurred in early October which was not witnessed along the coast. Many were over the Ilkley area on 2nd and again next day when 500 flew west near Harrogate and 240 over Knaresborough Ringing Station.

The usual second push took place in early November and Spurn had 700 on 1st. 1,000 entered a roost at Gisburn Forest on 10th. 2,700 flew south-east at Fairburn Ings on 6th and several other inland areas had an increase.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

The first was a female at Rishworth Moor on 20th March (HTJ) with the next, a male, at Ovenden on 21st.

Coastal passage in autumn was unusually heavy in late October and this was reflected inland. Six came in over the sea at Filey on 23rd and 16 were at Flamborough where there were up to eight until 30th when 61 were counted (PAL. AG. *et al*). Singles were along the coast at several places during this period with four at Paull on 30th. One to two were at Hornsea Mere from 27th October to 8th November.

There were ten birds at six moorland sites in the Halifax/Huddersfield area from 24th to 30th October. One was at Fairburn Ings on the 20th and very late inland records came from North Ripton on 6th November (JRF) and near Lower Barden Res. on 27th November and 4th December (PMW. FAW).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

The usual autumn influx along the coast during September, October and early November. There were no really spectacular falls, 1,000 at Spurn on 1st November was the maximum, 600 on 27th October being the next highest total.

White's Thrush *Zoothera dauna*

A bird was seen with Fieldfares at Felixkirk, near Thirsk on 18th December and again on 19th (B. Lavery). This is only the seventh published record for Yorkshire, the last being in December 1902.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

**Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe***

Inland records invariably come before any along the coast. V.C. 63 had the first at Bolton Ings on 20th March with singles at Winterset Res. and South Elmsall and four at Almholme on 21st, one at Catcliffe on 22nd, two at Wath Ings and singles at Gorple Res. and Digley Res. on 23rd, two at Elland G.P. on 28th and one on Outlane Moor on 30th. V.C. 64 had one on Snowden Moor on 26th March and singles at Ripon, Settle and near York on 29th.

The first coastal birds were at Spurn, Bempton, Scarborough and near Hornsea on 2nd April.

There was some notable passage at Spurn and Flamborough Head during September and October with 113 at Spurn on 17th September and 80 at Flamborough on 18th as maxima. Filey had 50 on 17th and 35 on 18th September, 32 at Mappleton on 19th and 40 on 26th, 48 at Hornsea on 28th. 40 were at Flamborough Head on 4th October when 21 were at Spurn.

There were several inland records up to mid-October and singles at Redbrook Res. and Rishworth Moor on 23rd, Southfield Res. and Ingbirchworth on 24th and Fairburn Ings on 25th and 31st. Spurn had birds up to 24th October, one was at Burniston on 31st and one was at Withernsea on 7th November.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Widespread reports from V.C.'s 63 and 64 with breeding confirmed for four pairs and two pairs respectively. Records were most numerous during October/November and came from many areas. Singles and pairs were mostly involved except for eight at Wath Ings during October, seven at Withens, Halifax on 13th October, 12 at Blacktoft Sands on 17th October on which date seven were at Thrybergh Tip, nine on Thorne Moors and four on Broomhead Moor. Five were on Barden Moor on 24th October. In the early months, five were at Langsett on 17th January and six at Wath Ings during January/February. V.C. 61 had singles on several dates from January to March with four along the coast from Burniston to Fraisthorpe on 6th January. One at Bempton on 15th May and several records from September to November. Maxima were nine at Easington Lagoons on 9th October and 12 along the roadside from Withernsea to Kilnsea on 16th. Two came in over the sea with *thrushes* at Filey on 23rd October. One at Flamborough on 24th October had an orange rump and a white throat but was not considered pale enough for one of the far eastern races (DIMW). Spurn had maxima of 19 on 8th October and 21 on 20th with up to five in November and six in December. Records in V.C. 62 came only from the coastal strip except for three on Fylingdales Moor in November. A pair with three juveniles at Scalby Mills in June were no doubt a local family (J. Webb). A pair at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. were settled in to breed but the habitat was destroyed.

One at Winterset Res. from 19th to 24th October was caught and ringed on the 22nd and showed characters of one of the eastern races *S. t. maura* or *stejnegeri* which are known as Siberian Stonechats (JSA. MJP).

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Some observers reported a better breeding year for this species. Autumn passage was evident during September and October with maximum of 26 at Filey on 17th September when ca. 100 were at Flamborough and 35 on 27th. Up to 80 at Spurn between 16th and 29th October. 17 were at Hornsea on 28th September. A few passed up to the end of October and one at Spurn on 4th November and Wassand on 6th.

A female type bird at Flamborough on 4th October was very pale greyish-brown above and white below with a distinct whitish wing panel formed by the secondary edges and could have originated in the east. It resembled the race *P. p. samaniscus* (SCM).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Coastal occurrences were normal with spring birds from March to mid-May and a few stragglers to early June. Nine at Flamborough Head on 3rd April was maximum. First of autumn was at Flamborough Head on 14th August whereafter birds occurred in small numbers along the coast up to 21st November. Maxima were up to 12 at Spurn in second half of October and eight at Easington on 9th.

Inland records were again only in V.C. 63 with singles at Stannington from 31st March to 3rd April, Crookesmoor on 6th April, Potteric Carr (2) on 8th, Elland G.P. on 14th/15th, Wessenden on 18th, Digley and Burbage on 19th, Emley Woodhouse on 26th June, Digley on 28th September and Langsett on 31st October.

Two pairs reared young in the Sheffield area and a third pair occupied territory. There were other singing males (DH).

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

Singles at Spurn on 23rd August, 12th September, 17th to 19th September, 25th September and 2nd to 4th October. One at Filey from 29th to 30th August (JR. HJW. DJB).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A heavy arrival of birds of the continental race along the east coast during September/October. Birds were in evidence at Flamborough Head from 11th September with noticeable 'falls' on 17th, 18th and 26th and in October on 25th and from 28th to 30th. Spurn had spectacular numbers during the same periods: 70 on 18th September, 70 to 150 during 25th to 27th, 250 on 1st October, most birds having dispersed by mid-month but an increase to 78 on the 19th and a big influx on 27th when 300 were present, followed by 600 on the 28th, 1,000 on 29th, 600 on 30th and 250 on 31st with 100 on 1st November, these birds quickly moving on. Flamborough Head had 85 on 17th September, 120 on 27th, 25 on 25th October, 50 on 26th and 250 on 29th. Filey had 40 on 17th September and there was a big influx at Hornsea Mere on 31st October.

Over 50 were at Fairburn Ings during late October may have been from these immigrants.

Grasshopper Warbler *Lucustella naevia*

V.C. 61 had very few birds and the only ones reported were at Spurn where there were singles on 21st April, 1st, 2nd and 8th May and 23rd September and Tophill Low Res. on 11th May.

V.C. 62 was also under-reported with records from only five localities; in the Scarborough district and near York and the Lower Derwent.

More birds in V.C.'s 63 and 64 with four pairs breeding at Blacktoft Sands and seven pairs at Winterset with singing males at *ca.* ten other localities. V.C. 64 had birds at *ca.* ten localities in spring and three in autumn with breeding confirmed at four other sites.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

One at Seamer Gravel Pits, near Scarborough on 16th May (RHA). The third county record.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

One at Denaby Ings from 13th April was by far the earliest, the next being one at Hornsea Mere on 28th April and the general arrival during the first week of May.

Some breeding figures away from the favoured localities, one at Allerton Park, near Knaresborough, three pairs at two sites near York, 12 pairs at Skipwith Common and 22 pairs at Fairburn Ings.

Spurn and Flamborough had migrant birds, the former in both spring and autumn with singles on 22nd, 30th and 31st May and on seven August dates from 14th with three on 23rd and 29th and on four dates in September and one on 1st October.

Flamborough had singles trapped on 13th, 21st and 23rd August and 17th September with sight records on 22nd and 28th August, three on 2nd October, two on 3rd, singles on 4th and 9th, two on 28th and one on 29th. (See also Marsh Warbler.) One was on Scarborough Castle Hill on 2nd October.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Mist-netting at Flamborough Head by A. Grieve and P. A. Lassey has inevitably produced good results. One caught on 13th August, one on 17th, two on 27th (one remaining until 29th) and one on 17th September. All were birds of the year. In addition were sight records of single birds by the same observers with DIMW. on 28th, 29th and 30th August and on

23rd October. One was also seen on 3rd and 5th October (DGB. SLJ). In spite of the supposed difficulty of separating this species from the last, even in the hand, the latter largely unfounded, the committee felt that these sight records were acceptable from observers having experience of the species in this migratory situation.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A good breeding season reported from several areas: *ca.* 45 pairs nested at Winterset Res., *ca.* 50 at Blacktoft Sands and *ca.* 50 at Fairburn Ings where there was a marked passage in spring and early autumn. 22 singing males at Swillington Ings on 8th May. 15 caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot Res. between 28th July and 17th August compared with only one or two in recent years with the same catching effort is also indicative of a successful season.

Correction to 1975 Report: Delete "and Potteric Carr on 11th."

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

One was watched in song near Settle on 13th May (per B.Sh).

One was at Seamer Road Mere, Scarborough on 2nd May (RHA. MF). Spurn had one on 30th and 31st May and one on 22nd August, two on 24th and singles on 25th, 29th/30th August, 18th September and 26th/27th September.

Flamborough Head had singles on 23rd and 30th August (AG. GED. DEM), two on 19th September and one on 2nd September (PAL. IS. RL). One at Filey Brigg on 26th September (A. & JD) and one on Scarborough Castle Hill on same day (RHA. MF).

Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida*

One at Flamborough Head on 22nd October (PAL. IS). A new bird to the county list.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

More birds than usual lingered late at inland sites and were no doubt part of the wintering trend. Singles were at Bretton Park, Hackenthorpe, Birkby, Roundhay Park, Bramley, Adel Dam, Weetwood and Fairburn Ings during November and at Blackmoorfoot Res., Sheffield, Huddersfield, Halifax, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Burley, Gledhow (Leeds), Ramsgill, Sutton-in-Forest and Stokesley in December. Coastal localities had birds into November and singles were at Spurn on 17th and 22nd December. Three wintered at Crayke, near Easingwold and one was at Millhouses, Sheffield during the last week of February and early March.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Passage birds occurred at Spurn, Kilnsea and Flamborough Head from 15th August to 24th September. One to two on any one date was usual but there were four at Flamborough on 29th August, six on 30th and three on 31st (PAL. IS. AG. DIMW. GED). Singles also occurred at Filey on 30th August (DJB), Hornsea Mere on 16th September (caught) (JESW) and Scarborough Castle Hill on 19th September (MF).

One was at Flamborough Head on 30th October.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

A marked passage at Flamborough Head during August and September with maxima of 45 on 29th August and 25 on 13th September. Spurn had smaller daily maxima during the same period and five were on Scarborough Castle Hill on 23rd September. One was at Flamborough Head on 30th October.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Several observers reported an increase in the breeding population. There were considered to be more than in recent years in the Lower Derwent area; certainly more widespread in the Barnsley area where *ca.* 40 pairs were located at 12 sites and in the Huddersfield area there were 16 pairs at 11 sites. 47 pairs were located in the Doncaster area. A general increase was noted in the Scarborough district and on Thorne Moors. The trapping figure at Knaresborough Ringing Station (52 birds) exceeded that of Lesser Whitethroat for the first time since 1968.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

The first, and exceptionally early, were two at Almholme on 2nd April, the next was at Burley-in-Wharfedale on 19th April (PCQ) the general arrival taking place during the last week of the month and the main influx during the second week of May. The last inland were two at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 26th September.

Coastal birds were reported regularly up to 27th September at Spurn and Flamborough with seven at the latter on this date. Spurn had two on 2nd October and singles on 3rd, 22nd and 24th and one was at Flamborough on 4th October.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*

A male was on Scarborough Castle Hill on 23rd and 24th September (MF. FAW. *et al.*). Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The earliest was at Potteric Carr on 4th April and the next at Fairburn Ings on 5th and Ripon on 8th. The main influx occurred from the 10th.

Some late birds were recorded: one sang briefly at Adel on 24th October and one was caught at Hackenthorpe on 14th November (ML).

Coastal records were regular up to mid-October with one at Skeffling on 31st (DIMW). Passage at Flamborough had peaks of *ca.* 100 birds on 23rd August and *ca.* 80 on 24th September when Spurn had *ca.* 90. 400 were caught and ringed at Knaresborough Ringing Station from July to mid-September.

A nest at Danby in Cleveland on 18th June, contained one egg and a good sized Adder (AB).

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

A male in song at Filey Ravine on 29th August was watched by I. Corbett, H. J. Whitehead and Miss A. Foster.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Correction to 1973 Report: Delete "and from 31st October to 2nd November (DJB)". This record has been withdrawn by the observer who is now certain the bird was a Chiffchaff.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles at Rotherham on 3rd January and Tadcaster on 15th (SML). One at Stanley S.F. from 10th January to 14th March (SB. Miss DW). One fed on aphids at Adel on 5th January. Singles were near Harrogate on 26th February and 2nd March. One at Lindley Res. on 5th December and Naburn S.F. on 12th December.

Several birds remained at inland localities well into October, the latest being at Winterset Res. on 16th. One at Fairburn Ings on 31st October was no doubt this species.

Coastal areas had a marked passage in October with 20 at Flamborough on 9th, 16 on 29th, 20 on 30th and small numbers in early November with six on 14th and one on 21st (PAL. *et al.*). Three were at Bridlington on 31st October (DJB) and eight at Skeffling on same

day (DIMW). Spurn had up to four to 9th November, one to two to 15th, one on 27th and two on 28th.

A bird at Flamborough on 4th October was considered to belong to the siberian race (SCM).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sybillatrix*

This scarce passage bird was recorded more frequently than usual. Singles at Hornsea Mere on 5th and 9th May, Spurn on 6th May and 4th June and Seamer Road Mere, Scarborough on 2nd May.

Flamborough Head produced one on 13th August, two on 21st and singles on 24th and 31st, two on 17th September and one on 18th. One was at Filey on 29th August. One on Scarborough Castle Hill on 23rd September and two on 26th.

Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli*

A singing male over Kilnsea Church on 30th May (GED. MAH. *et al*). One at Flamborough from 2nd to 9th October (CDRH. *et al*).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

One at Ravenscar on 17th September (LAT). One on Scarborough Castle Hill from 23rd to 26th September (RHA. MF. *et al*). One at Spurn on 2nd October and one on 25th. One at Flamborough Head on 3rd October (PAL. IS).

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

One caught at Spurn on 23rd October was still present on 24th (BB. BRS. *et al*). A second bird caught on 25th (BB. BRS. *et al*). One on 7th/8th November (JC. JED. *et al*).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One at Flamborough Head from 26th September to 4th October was caught and ringed on first date (PAL. IS. DIMW. *et al*). The third county record.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

The usual influx during late September and October with maxima at Flamborough Head of 70 on 27th September, 85 on 26th October and 300 on 29th October. The latter date, and up to the 31st produced records of large numbers from five other coastal watchpoints including 160 at Spurn.

Winterset Res. had an obvious movement during 3rd/4th April when 14 were caught.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

A female at Flamborough from 20th to 23rd March (PAL. IS. *et al*). One at Bempton on 10th April (SR). One at Spurn from 10th to 12th April and one on 31st May. A male caught and ringed at Winestead on 17th April (SLJ) and on at Throxenby Mere, Scarborough on 8th April (MF).

One at Spurn on 25th October with another bird on 27th and one at Flamborough Head on 26th (AG).

There were no inland records, following the unprecedented total of ten in 1975.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

One at Addingham on 16th April (FAW) was, as often happens with this species, well ahead of the next birds at Bolton Priory on 3rd May and Farnham G.P. and Headingley on 4th.

35 were on Flamborough Head on 18th September but only four at Spurn on same day.

A late bird was at Flamborough on 4th October (SCM). One was inland at Silkstone on 3rd October and one near Huddersfield on 28th September.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Breeding records were down on last year but Duncombe Park and Sleightholmdale had 18 and 15 pairs respectively (GWF).

Coastal passage in August was much in evidence at Flamborough and Spurn and reflected at most other coastal areas. 40 at Flamborough Head on 14th August, 45 on 17th, *ca.* 80 on 22nd and 23rd, 65 on 24th, 55 on 29th and up to 20 by 27th. Spurn had similar figures with 62 on 22nd, 60 on 23rd, 55 on 24th and 34 on 25th. Small numbers passed throughout September and into early October. An exceptionally late bird was caught at Paull on 13th November (SLJ).

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Birds were recorded from 22nd August to 23rd October at Spurn, Flamborough, Filey, Mableton, Scarborough Castle Hill and Scalby Mills. The first were two at Flamborough on 22nd August where birds occurred on several dates during September with a maximum of four on 26th/27th and two on 22nd October with one on 23rd. Spurn had one on 11th September and birds on five other dates towards the month-end with two on 26th and one on 19th October. Three were at Kilnsea on 23rd September, two up to 26th and one on 27th. At least three birds on Scarborough Castle Hill from 17th to 26th September. Singles at Filey Brigg on 12th September, Filey Ravine on 16th, Mableton on 26th and Scalby Mills on 30th.

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

A noticeable influx at Spurn on 27th October when birds were showing characters of the continental race *P. m. modularis*. This is one of the few occasions that taxonomic evidence of the origin of these undoubted immigrants has been offered.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

One at Kilnsea on 24th October (CDRH. *et al.*).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Spring passage along the coast involved the usual numbers and was witnessed at a few localities inland. 130 flew north-west at Winterset Res. on 27th March and 60 on 28th and Wath Ings had 160 and 40 flying in the same direction on these two dates.

Spectacular southerly movements in the autumn were evident at most coastal localities and also inland. Spurn had a maximum of 1,500 on 14th September. 500 flew south over Cockett Moor, near Settle on 26th September and 138 flew south at Withernsea in 1½ hours on 27th. Smaller numbers were counted passing at several other places mainly during late September.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Two at West Tanfield on 4th April were very early with the next, two at Hampsthwaite S.F. and one at Spurn on 10th April. Singing at Throxenby Mere, near Scarborough on the 11th

but most areas did not record their first birds until the third week of the month and the main influx during early May.

Passage on the coast involved 25 at Flamborough Head on 17th September and 15 at Spurn on 22nd. Late birds were at Spurn on 16th and 18th October.

Rock Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Now that observers have latched on to the presence of the Scandinavian Rock Pipit *A. s. littoralis* along our coast during the spring, more records of this distinctive race are forthcoming. Flamborough Head had two on 23rd March (AG), four on 3rd and 4th April, one on 1st May, four on 16th and three on 17th. Hornsea Mere had up to ten during mid-March and a few during 8th to 19th April (RGH). Up to three were at Scalby Mills on 24th February (MF) and one during April, seen by very many rare gull hunters. Two were at Spurn on 20th March and one on 21st. One was at Filey Brigg on 6th May (JB. *et al*) and one at Easington on 16th October (SML). Some old records of Water Pipit *A. s. spinoletta* should now be looked at critically.

A bird claimed and described as a Water Pipit was at Swinsty Res. on 23rd October (FAW).

Rock Pipits occurred inland at six places in V.C. 63 during January to March and September to November with birds at Blacktoft Sands (up to five) during December and at three places in V.C. 64 in March/April and October/November.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

The roost in the girders of York railway station (see Report for 1975) held 100 birds in October increasing to 1500 by late November. 100 roosted in buildings near Bridlington bus station on 9th March (SML) and *ca.* 200 roosted on the brewery buildings in Tadcaster (SML). 200 roosted in a maize crop near Ripon on 24th August (CS) and there were several roosts at reservoirs and large waters during the autumn with maximum of 250 at Redmires Res. on 7th September (KC). 400 roosted at Elland G.P. on 24th January (SH).

The spring passage of Pies through the county during March and April involved several Whites *M. a. alba* mainly during April and some in May.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Pair feeding young near Settrington in V.C. 61 during June; one of very few pairs recorded breeding in the vice-county.

42 birds flew south at Spurn on 14 days in September and smaller numbers in October.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

The first was at Tophill Low Res. on 8th April, one at Bentley Tilts on 9th, two at Winterset Res. and one at Worsborough Res. on 10th and at Mickletown Ings, Harrogate and Pool-in-Wharfedale on 11th. The main arrival was however late, and it wasn't until the last week of the month that birds were generally distributed. 173 were at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 1st May (GDM). Fairburn Ings had a roost of 250 on 7th September and Winterset Res. had 300 on 21st August (only 50 on 23rd) and 116 on 13th September.

More birds than usual lingered into October with one at Flamborough on 2nd, three at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 3rd and one on 9th, and one at Fairburn Ings on 8th.

Birds showing characters of the Blue-headed race *M. f. flava* though not necessarily originating from the type area were at Hornsea Mere on 22nd/23rd April and 13th May, the latter, a female, probably nested in the area (RGH) and two at Winterset Res. on 1st May and one on 26th July (JSA), one at Grassington S.F. on 2nd August. One at Tinsley S.F. on 13th October was very late (JH).

One showing characters of the Grey-headed Wagtail *M. f. thunbergi* was at Fairburn Ings on 10th May (PK. SCM. CW).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Very few records in the early months: V.C. 61; one at Molescroft on 26th January. V.C. 62; the Scarborough area had a few birds at four localities with 14 at Newby on 21st January (MF) and eight in the town centre on 5th February (RHA). V.C. 63; one near Huddersfield on 27th January, eight at Mirfield on 1st–3rd February, three at Halifax from 5th to 7th February and one at Kirkheaton on 8th February. V.C. 64; one to three at a few places in the Harrogate area during January to March with ten on 8th February. Seven at Ripon on 13th January, three near Skipton from 20th to 24th March and ten near Leeds at the end of March. Three were at Otley and four at Swinsty in January and three at Menston in March. V.C. 65; no records.

At the year-end there were even fewer reported. Seven came in over the sea at Flamborough Head on 20th November (PAL. IS), one was at Scarborough on 8th November (RHA), one at Huddersfield on 10th December, two at North Rigton on 7th December, three at Knotford Nook on 10th and one at York on 28th.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

Singles occurred at 24 localities in V.C. 63 and 13 in V.C. 64 from January to April and October to year-end with a very late bird near York on 6th May. One was at Scarborough on 3rd May. In V.C. 61 there were three records of singles in January, one in February and five in April. Three were at Flamborough Head on 27th September, two on 28th and one to two on several dates during October. Singles at Withernsea on 6th October and Easington on 9th, two at Hornsea on 1st December and one at Beverley on 5th.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

A male at Hornsea Mere on 23rd May (IGH. RGH. CWM).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

The only birds in spring were a male and a female at Spurn from 28th to 30th May and a male on 31st May.

In autumn, records came from several coastal areas, the first being at Cherry Cobb on 11th August (JEA). One at Spurn from 20th to 22nd August and another on 29th/30th. Two on 3rd September (one up to 8th), one to two from 18th to 26th September and one on 30th which stayed to 15th October. One at Ravenscar on 17th September (LAT), one at Flamborough on 5th October (SLJ. IF), and an immature at Dane's Dyke on 16th October (PAL. DIMW).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

12,000 flew south at Spurn on 12th October with up to 3,000 on the peninsula on several dates during the last two weeks and 3,000 flying south on 7th and 8th November. 1,000 were on Flamborough Head on 25th October.

The usual large roosts were reported, Wentworth and Denaby being the largest with 25,000 and 20,000 birds respectively. A roost flight of 26,000 birds flew over Fairburn Ings on 12th March and 17,000 in mid-September. Other roosts did not exceed *ca.* 5,000 birds.

The inevitable 'white' bird was seen; at Grassington on 31st October.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

No records from V.C. 65.

V.C. 61; two at Flamborough Head on 26th September (PAL. IS) and one in East Park, Hull on 24th December (JEA).

V.C. 62; six in Duncombe Park on 10th April and three on 2nd May and one in Glaisdale on 17th April (DJB). Eight at Bransly in August where bred (PH).

V.C. 63; singles at Roche Abbey on 27th January and at Agden, Sheffield on 3rd October (IF. JK). Singles at Bessacar in March, four at Sandall Beat on 15th May and one in July and singles at Melton Wood in June and December.

V.C. 64; maximum at Studley Park was four on 3rd December (RTS). Three at Copgrove on 26th November (PTT). Six near Ripon from January to March (CS). One to two birds seen during the year at Tadcaster, West Tanfield, Hackfall, Ilkley, Bolton Abbey and Bramham Park. A pair with three juveniles near Ilkley on 21st July (KR).

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Several flocks of up to 200 birds reported from V.C.'s 63 and 64 mainly during the winter months (January/February). Larger numbers were 1,000 at Wentworth from 17th to 31st October and on 24th December, 500 at a roost at Rockley on 17th January and a flock of 750 at Beighton (V.C. 63) on 26th February. Passage at Spurn in autumn had a maximum of 1,000 flying south on 8th October.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

An exceptional year for this species with larger flocks than usual. Flocks of 50 to 100 birds were reported from 20 localities in vice-counties 63 and 64 with some others in excess of 100: 250 from early August to October at Potteric Carr, 118 in Bretton Park on 27th October, 150 at Knostrop on 31st August, 200 near Harrogate on 12th September (PJC), 234 at Staveley Lagoon on 30th August (PTT) and 250 at Bishop Monkton on 17th September (JLCG. CJH).

Coastal passage was evidenced as usual at Spurn with birds moving south from late March to early July and from early September to early December. Maxima were 173 on 1st May, 477 on 27th September, 946 on 7th October and 900 on 16th October. 150 flew *north* at Flamborough on 8th May and up to 100 were present in September with 280 on 17th.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Fewer than in 1975 and the largest flocks were 60 in the Harrogate Pine Woods on 11th January and 80 in Eccleshall Woods on 28th February. 50 at Bowden Houstead Woods on 27th January, 50 at Eccup Res. and flocks of 40 at Broomhead Res. and two places near Leeds in the early months. Numbers elsewhere did not exceed 30 and were generally single figures.

In the autumn, 80 were at Manor Park (V.C. 63) on 27th September, 40 at Westwood Edge (V.C. 63) on 13th October and 40 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 16th October. 34 were at the point at Spurn on 19th October. One was found dead at Flamborough on 17th August.

Males were in full song at Great Ayton on 27th February and at Timble in the Washburn Valley on 29th April. At least three pairs bred at one locality in V.C. 63 and were attending ten to 15 juveniles on 18th July.

There were several reports of birds visiting suburban gardens in the Sheffield area and visiting nut feeders at Huddersfield, Harrogate and Settle in February/March.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

An increasing tendency for large numbers to winter inland was indicated by *ca.* 60 during January to early March at Adel, Leeds, 50 near Leeds on 20th February, 70 at Adel Dam on 25th February, 50 at Eastmoor, near York in February and up to 40 in November and

December where there had been 600 on 16th September and 200 in October. Several other places had small numbers during the winter where birds are generally absent. Up to 30 birds per hour were passing west at Blacktoft Sands on several days in late March when the usual return of migrants takes place.

The usual large flocks assembled in autumn and gatherings of 200 to 400 were recorded from several areas. 1,000 at Hay-a-Park G.P., Knaresborough during August was the county's largest flock; these fed on weeds growing in the newly landscaped banks. 750 were at Blacktoft Sands on 30th August and 200 were there from October to year-end.

Twite *Acanthis flavirostris*

Again, large numbers were present in V.C. 63 where birds occurred in all months. Black-moorfoot Res. had a flock not thought to exceed *ca.* 200 during late July from which 328 birds were caught and ringed in eleven days (MLD). Flocks of *ca.* 100 occurred at Gorple Lower Res. in April, Scammonden in August, Ringthorpe Edge on 18th September and Redmires on 13th October with smaller flocks at a few other sites. In V.C. 64, the large party was again on Grennhow Hill where there were 130 on 21st August. 150 at High Trenhouse, near Settle on 24th August and 100 near Sannet Hall on 3rd September. 500 at High Greenfield on 6th September. 50 were at Horton-in-Ribblesdale on 5th October. 150 were near Leighton Res. on 14th February (PY). Small numbers occurred at many places too numerous to list mainly in the autumn and included lowland sites in the east.

Coastal parties were small and were mainly at Spurn. The figures given in the Spurn Report are difficult to interpret clearly but 130 passed south on 7th October which seems to have been the daily maximum. No other flocks exceeded 20 birds except for 32 at Burniston on 23rd March.

Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

A more normal year than last when numbers were spectacular. Flocks of up to *ca.* 100 were frequently reported mainly during the late months from all parts of the county and a few larger ones. 250 in Wharnccliffe Woods on 24th February, 140 at Sutton-in-Forest on 14th February, 200 at Silkstone Fall Wood on 13th October and 200 in the Upper Ewden Valley on 27th December. 150 were at Potteric Carr during August. 150 at Bolton Abbey on 16th November, up to 200 at Eastmoor, York during the winter (RAI), 270 at Leighton Res. on 9th October and 200 at Gouthwaite Res. on 7th November (PJC), *ca.* 180 at Tadcaster on 26th October (SML). 150 fed on the shoreline at Eccup Res. from March to May and included a few birds showing characters of the Mealy Redpoll *A. f. flammea* as were four ringed with *cabaret* polls at Eastmoor, York on 4th February (RAI). Other Mealies were one at Flamborough Head on 16th May (PAL), two on 29th October and one on 31st October (DIMW) and one on Scarborough Castle Hill on 27th October (SML).

Arctic Redpoll *Acanthis hornemanni*

One at Spurn on 12th May (DIMW).

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Serín *Serinus serinus*

A male singing at Spurn on 4th and 5th May and two on 23rd May.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A male at Dane's Dyke, Flamborough on 28th October was considered to belong to the northern race *P. p. pyrrhula* (PAL. IS).

The largest flocks reported were 33 on Thorne Moor on 26th January (ML), 26 at Rockley on 5th December. Up to 30 at Eastmoor, York during January, 20 on 10th April and 36 on 16th September (RAI).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Even fewer records than in 1975: an immature at Flamborough Head on 10th October (PAL. IS), four at Swinden Plantation (V.C. 63) on 29th June (JED), one at Ewden on 21st November (JIM), three at Redmires on 18th July (KC) and 20 to 30 at Strines in late December (DH. DG), the only flock reported. Seven at Timble in the Wasburn Valley on 7th February (FAW), three on 14th and on 21st (GFT. *et al*). Two adults and two juveniles at Stocks Res. on 13th August and a female on 20th (JF).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Some notable flocks were again reported: 200 at Wentworth on 24th February (GMB), 300 in Bretton Park during late December, 450 roosting at Walshaw, Halifax on 26th December (IC), 270 at Leighton Res. on 1st January and 200 during February/March (PJC), 200 at Bransdale Head on 14th February (FAW), 100–150 roosting at Creskeld, near Leeds in December. 100 flew south-east over Cockett Moor, near Settle on 26th September and 60 on 9th October (BSh). There were a few other flocks of up to 70 birds.

Birds passed south at Spurn mainly during September with maxima of 101 on 27th, and on several October days. Many were down on the peninsula during this period with maxima of 300 on 12th October and 200 on 27th.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

There were some good flocks in the early months with the largest at Leighton Res. where there were 400 on 18th January, 600 on 14th March and 150 on 4th April (PJC) and at Sancton in Holderness where a flock of 1,500 finches consisted mainly of Bramblings on 1st January with 500 on 19th (DIMW).

100 were at Knostrop during February, 200 at Pudsey on 13th March, 160 on Figham Pastures on 29th February (AMA) and 150 near Beverley on 15th March (LF). There were smaller flocks at many other localities throughout the county. Late birds were a male at Coxley Valley, Middlestown on 13th May and at Spurn on 30th/31st May and 3rd June.

First autumn record was at Spurn on 13th September. Immigration in October peaked at Spurn on 19th October when there were 380 down on the peninsula. 150 were at Flamborough Head on 25th October, 155 at Spurn on 28th and 150 at Gilcross on 31st. The largest inland flocks were 500 at Ogden Res. on 18th December (DC) and 350 at a roost there on 29th December (ADW). 100 roosting near Settle during November/December, 150 at Ilkley on 5th December and 120 in Bretton Park on 21st December. 200 were at Beverley Clumps on 17th December (EHW).

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

The roost at Wath Ings was again large with 300 on 8th March and 8th April and 200 in October including a *leucistic* bird. A roost at Hornsea Mere held 100 on 22nd February and 5th December with 20 on 24th October. 80 were at Flamborough Head on 17th September. 500 were at Rosscarrs, Selby in August and 60 in September (PR). 100 at Fairburn Ings on 1st January and 84 in December (SCM). 40 at Starbeck, Harrogate on 29th February (AO'N). Stubble fields near Tadcaster attracted 470 on 1st January, 550 on 15th January, 650 on 27th January and 850 on 1st February (SML); quite exceptional numbers for the county.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza calandra*

Stubble fields near Tadcaster attracted 240 on 1st January and 350 on 1st February (SML). A feeding flock at Brotherton, near Fairburn peaked at 600 on 1st January with 400 on 17th and 170 on 15th February (SML. SCM). There were no comparable flocks, the next largest being 50 at Potteric Carr during February, 60 at Ewden Height during January/February, 80 at Winterset Res. during February/March, 70 at Hatfield Moor on 16th October, 70 at Shadwell, Leeds in December and 60 at Worsborough on 3rd December. Four near Settle in April and one in August were the first records for the area since 1969 (BSh).

A bird at Scalby on 20th June had all the yellow plumage replaced by pale bluish-grey with no hint of yellow or olive in the plumage. Comparison with accompanying Yellowhammer showed all the markings to be otherwise typical. The bird resembled a Rock Bunting *E. cia* when only the head and back was in view (SCM. JRM. AJW. *et al*).

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

A relative glut this year with a male at Kilnsea on 3rd June (BRS. *et al*), a male and a female at Spurn on 22nd August (MS. ML), two at Hornsea Mere on 25th August (WFC. RGH. IGH) and single immatures at Flamborough Head on 17th September and 9th October (PAL).

One at Flamborough Head on 29th/30th August was golden-buff in tone and gave rise to thoughts of Cretzschmar's Bunting *E. caesia*, but no more (PAL. IS. DIMW. AG).

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

An immature at Spurn from 1st to 5th October was caught and ringed on the first date. This is the first record for Spurn (BRS. DB. *et al*).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Blacktoft Sands had 700 on 7th January, 700 on 16th October and 850 on 7th November, numbers falling off to year-end. The estimated breeding population was 140 pairs (AG). *ca.* 100 pairs nested at Fairburn Ings (SCM). Of the many other smaller flocks, the maxima were 50 in the Lower Derwent on 18th September (GS) and 80 roosting at Wath Ings on 16th September, 120 were on stubble near Tadcaster on 1st January (SML). 350 roosted at

Eastmoor, York from mid-November to year-end (RAI) and 670 roosted on Strensall Common on 28th December, an exceptional number (JW).

A *leucistic* bird was near Ripon on 8th October (SW).

Birds passed south at Spurn in September/October with maxima of 63 on 19th September and 133 on 13th October.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

Small numbers occurred along the coast during January to March. Maxima were at Fraisthorpe where there were 12 on 6th January, nine on 18th and eight on 28th (DEM. SLJ. *et al*). Seven other places had one to two birds, the last being at Filey on 27th March (RHA). One was at Blacktoft Sands on 4th March (AG).

First of the autumn was at Spurn on 6th September whereafter there were singles on several dates to year-end with maxima of five on 26th September and six on 27th October. Birds occurred at seven other coastal sites from Filey southwards during September to December, usually low single figures, seven at Atwick on 9th December being the only figure over four (WFC).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Occurred in fairly good numbers along the coast from Scarborough to Spurn during the early months up to the last bird at Spurn on 16th April. Maxima were 86 at Mappleton on 18th January (WFC), 42 at Ewden on 19th January, up to 37 near Hornsea in mid-January and 19 on 8th February (WFC) and 20 at Saltend on 17th February. Spurn had 110 on 10th January, 80 on 31st and 60 on 1st February as its maxima.

First of autumn was at Spurn on 4th September with another on 7th then one at Flamborough on 17th. Maxima at the year-end were 47 near Atwick on 2nd November and 9th December (WFC), 50 at Burniston on 1st November (PAL) and 80 at Spurn on 27th November.

There were several inland records from the higher ground in the west during January/February and November/December, usually single birds but 40 flying over Redmires Moor on 7th January (PA). Ten flew south-east over lowland Askham Bog on 28th December (DW). Five were near Little Almscliffe (Washburn Valley) on 17th September (FAW). One at Blacktoft Sands on 2nd November and two at Tophill Low Res. from 21st to 25th November.

Rufous-sided Towhee *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*

The bird which was at Spurn from 5th September 1975 to the year-end was last seen on 10th January (JED. BRS. *et al*). Published with the escape proviso.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

The usual flocks occurred with 200 to 300 at Sancton (V.C. 61) (January), Kirkheaton (January), Blackmoorfoot (July), Winterset (April), Wath Ings (August), Huddersfield (December), Farnham G.P. (January) and Hay-a-Park G.P. (December). Larger flocks were 350 in farmyard at Burniston on 6th January, 400 at Fairburn Ings on 26th August (SCM) and 490 at Eastmoor, York on 27th December (RAI). 350 in stubble near Tadcaster on 1st February (SML).

Spurn had maxima of 1,151 on 5th October, 500 on 8th, 570 on 13th, 377 on 17th and 330 on 24th. These were passing with House Sparrows. Flamborough Head had 250 on 27th September and 300 on 4th October, 500 on 16th and 600 on 22nd, *ca.* 25 pairs nested along the R.S.P.B. stretch of Bempton Cliffs (SR).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

In March, a female landed on the water at Adel Dam and after splashing for some minutes was aggressively approached by a Little Grebe and eventually drowned by it.

A flock of 700 at Fairburn Ings on 7th September.

The sparrow movements at Spurn were more spectacular than usual with both Tree and House involved. Many were recorded as sparrow *sp.* but those specified as House included 1,260 on 4th October, 1,880 on 5th, 1,200 on 8th, 2,694 on 13th and 1,122 on 17th. 5,000 on the 16th were not specified!

The following species also occurred in the county during 1976 but the information received did not warrant valid comment or their status has remained unchanged during the past three years (see previous reports):

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, **Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*, **Pochard** *Aythya farina*, **Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*, **Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*, **Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*, **Curlew** *Numenius arquata*, **Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*, **Greenshank** *T. nebularia*, **Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*, **Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*, **Great Tit** *Parus major*, **Coal Tit** *P. ater*, **Willow Tit** *P. montanus*, **Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*, **Tree Creeper** *Certhia familiaris*, **Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*, **Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*.



Escaped Birds

It has become desirable to publish a list of birds which have escaped from captivity. These differ from those which appear in the classified list with the escape proviso in that their captive origin is in little doubt. The editors of *British Birds* have asked county report editors to keep a watching brief on such species as Ring-neck Parrakeet and I ask those concerned to include an escape section in their reports. The number of species being imported is vast and many more are bred in captivity. Some escapes are inevitable and the situation with species which could conceivably reach Britain under natural conditions will continue to be a problem. The list below will be far from complete.

Scarlet Ibis *Eudocimus ruber*

One at Adel Dam, Leeds on 28th June (JSF. CM).

Sarus Crane *Grus antigone*

One near Ripon from 20th April to 18th May (CS. SW) and one near Leyburn on 23rd May (GEA).

Indian Hill Mynah *Gracula religiosa*

One feeding on cotoneaster berries at Cornelian Bay, Scarborough on 18th November (J. Webb).

Vitteline Masked Weaver *Ploceus vitellinus*

Two males escaped from an aviary at Castleford in July and built nests in a local garden.

Bishop Bird *Euplectes* sp.

One at Tilmire, near York with House Sparrows on 17th September (MEW).

Ring-necked Parrakeet *Psittacula krameri*

One at Spurn on 7th July.

Bronze Mannakin *Spermestes cuculatus*

One at Spurn on 7th August.

Red-headed Bunting *Emberiza bruniceps*

One at Spurn from 11th to 13th June.

Ross's Gull at Scarborough

R. H. Appleby

INTRODUCTION

The Scarborough district continued to be the most important wintering area in Yorkshire for gulls during 1976, the two sewer outlets attracting large numbers as in 1975.

At 13.00 hrs. on the 27th March at Jackson's Bay, a Ross's Gull *Rhodestethia rosea* was seen sitting on the leeward side of the cliffs on almost flat calm sea, approximately 15 metres from the main sewer outlet. A force five westerly wind in the morning, whipping the sea into small white-topped waves, had subsided by mid-day to force three. There was little cloud, excellent visibility and bright, warm sun.

BEHAVIOUR

Although mainly in the company of Black-headed gulls *Larus ridibundus* and Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla* the Ross's often kept a small distance away, sitting more or less on its own. It would often feed in this position, buoyantly swimming and gently turning, delicately picking at the surface for food, reminiscent of a Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*. For no apparent reason it would suddenly take wing with rapid wing beats; probably the only time the flight appeared laboured, then in a tern-like manner *Sterna sp.* it would fly and settle on another part of the sea. It was frequently seen hovering amongst the hundreds of other gulls present over the welling surface of one or the other sewer outlets, feeding by picking at the surface. At other times it was seen to fly south over the North Bay and feed offshore at the Marine Drive, appearing much like a Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* at that distance. It once flew north and out of sight only to reappear a short time later.

Occasionally it was seen to fly upstream at Scalby Beck, the only time it was seen flying overland. It was often seen roosting on the outer rocks at Scalby Mills, and washing and preening in the fresh water outflow there in company with Black-headed Gulls and Kittiwakes.

PLUMAGE DESCRIPTION

The head was small and rounded with a white forehead. Crown washed pale grey (much overdone in some field guides). Small dark, almost crescentic shaped mark behind the eye in region of ear coverts. Slightly darker grey wash around the neck and down on to the sides of upper breast appeared as a shawl. The bill was much shorter than head length and was black. It was interesting to note that in some light conditions the base of the upper mandible was distinctly pale brownish. The eye was dark, accentuated in size by blackish fleckings around it. These were more concentrated below the eye.

The mantle, back, scapulars and wing coverts were washed pale blue grey, much paler than Black-headed Gull or Kittiwake. The secondaries were silver grey broadly tipped white, forming a white trailing edge, broadest at the inner secondaries, narrowing at the outer. This was also visible on the underwing. The primaries were silver-grey with the exception of the outer web of the second which was black. This could be seen at rest and in flight at reasonable range. The quills of the outermost primaries were also darkish and made the tip of the wing appear marginally darker in some sight conditions. Some scapulars on the right wing only, had some very fine darkish pencilling, very difficult to see even at close range and indeed missed during the early part of its stay. Over the sea, depending on the light conditions, the grey underwings sometimes appeared strikingly dark, almost blackish, and much like an adult Little Gull *Larus minutus*. The wedge shaped tail was white with one of the central feathers slightly worn; the shape varied according to the birds mode of flight. The underparts had a cream or off-white wash. Although not always discernable, there was a suggestion of a pinkish tinge on the right side of the lower breast. The legs and feet were brownish pink in colour sometimes appearing darker.



Plate 1. Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*, Scalby Mills, Scarborough 27th to 30th March and 22nd to 28th April 1976. Photos: Upper, John Seeviour; lower, Dave Bryan.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Although slightly larger, the bird was superficially like an adult Little Gull when sat on the water, except that the long pointed wings extended well beyond the tail, giving the bird an elongated or tapered appearance. In certain lights the underwings appeared very dark, and with the white trailing edge, further resembled a Little Gull. At times the pointed wings appeared markedly angled at the carpal joint resembling a Common Tern and accentuated its tern-like flight, most noticeable at a distance.

PERIOD OF OBSERVATION

The bird was present in the area of Jackson's Bay and Scalby Mills until the 30th March whereafter it was not sighted until it re-appeared on 22nd April and stayed until the 28th.

A Ross's Gull further north at South Shields from the 9th to 11th April may well have been the same bird. The weather during this latter period was very cool with winds from the north-north-east and coastal fog at times. The bird was watched for long periods at ranges varying from ten to 2,000 metres and afforded excellent opportunity for study.

DISCUSSION

I do not consider that it would have moulted into full summer plumage after leaving Scarborough at the end of April and suggest that it would be 1977 before full breeding dress would be acquired. It has been suggested however (J. R. Mather pers comm.), that an individual out of its normal range and not coming into breeding condition, would probably be delayed in the moult and in any case, as the breeding season is short and not until June, there is a probability of the moult to full plumage being an accelerated one.

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Hybrid Pochard × Ferruginous Duck

On 18th January 1976, at Gouthwaite Reservoir, Upper Nidderdale, I saw a duck which superficially resembled a Ferruginous and which had been identified as such by some observers. It was not typical however and further inspection revealed that it was showing characters of the recognised hybrid known colloquially as Padget's Pochard.

Superficially very like a Ferruginous Duck but pale areas at the base of the bill, less peaked crown and the three toned bill colour (resembling Pochard) excluded Ferruginous. Also, the bird seemed wrong, and did not immediately strike me as being a Ferruginous (as they usually do).

Inquiries led me to a bird seen at Dungeness in 1965 which had been identified by Jeffery Harrison as a Padget's Pochard. This bird had, according to Dave Holman (verbally), been very like a Ferruginous except for the bill colour and pale areas at the base of the bill. Both these characters were present in the Gouthwaite bird.

A comprehensive paper on *Aythya* hybrids was published in the Wildfowl Trust's Annual Report for 1966 — pages 49–65. The main message of this paper was that close attention to detail is required by an observer confronted by an apparent Ferruginous Duck (or Ring-necked Duck or Lesser Scaup) and stressed the importance of the bill colour and pattern which can be critical.

DESCRIPTION

A shade smaller and a lot neater than nearby Tufted Duck. Body more rufous, less blackish than female Tufted but not approaching the mahogany of a male Ferruginous Duck. Back darker than flanks which were paler, more rufous brown. Breast darker than sides and darker than female Tufted's breast. Head neat and round with forehead running into bill smoothly. Pale area at base of bill on sides of face comparable with the most extreme female Tufted's but not with female Scaup.

Bill larger and thinner than Tufted Duck's (whose bills did not form a line with forehead), pale grey with black nail and whitish area between grey and black. Under tail coverts pure white showing conspicuously in profile. Broad white wing bar right along secondaries to outer primaries. Eye pale, not showing any yellow.

D. J. Britton

The Need for Field Descriptions

It is our aim to continue to present these reports with complete accuracy in order that those who use them in the future may accept the records of all species without doubt or query.

To maintain this accuracy contributors are reminded that all records of rare or uncommon and difficult species are considered by the Reports Committee before being accepted for publication or forwarded to *British Birds* for their decision.

The work of the Reports Committee can be reduced considerably if observers will submit descriptions *as soon as possible* after the bird had been seen. Details should be the description taken in the field, before reference to any text books, and should include the locality, date and time, habitat, weather conditions, optical aids used, etc. Forms, based upon the form accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committees, can be obtained from any Vice-County Recorder for submitting details of any of the species listed below:

Uncommon and Difficult Species

Black-throated Diver	Pectoral Sandpiper
Great Northern Diver	Grey Phalarope
Red-necked Grebe	Red-necked Phalarope
Slavonian Grebe	Stone Curlew
Black-necked grebe	Glaucous Gull
Leach's Petrel	Long-tailed Skua
Storm Petrel	Pomarine Skua
Great Shearwater	Iceland Gull
Bittern	Mediterranean Gull
Spoonbill	Sabine's Gull
Red-crested Pochard	Roseate Tern
Ferruginous Duck	Black Guillemot
Smew	Wood Lark
Bean Goose	Golden Oriole
Snow Goose	Chough
Golden Eagle	Bluethroat
Rough-legged Buzzard	Marsh Warbler
Goshawk	Icterine Warbler
Kite	Melodious Warbler
Honey Buzzard	Yellow-browed Warbler
Osprey	Barred Warbler
Hobby	Firecrest
Spotted Crake	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Kentish Plover	Cirl Bunting
Dotterel	Ortolan Bunting
Temminck's Stint	Lapland Bunting

British Birds Rarities

All rarities requiring submission to the British Birds Rarities Committee, last listed in *British Birds*, Vol. 67, 1974, pages 347-8.

Races

All well-defined races of common species, e.g.: Blue-headed Wagtail, Water Pipit.

Descriptions should normally be furnished in support of records of migrant birds seen out of season, and commoner birds seen in unusual circumstances.

List of contributors whose initials appear in the classified list (with apologies for omissions). Many others contributed and their records were invaluable.

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